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A-G Ben-Yair resigns, denies being forced out

EVELYN GORDON
ATTORNEY-GENERAL Michael Ben-Yair unexpectedly announced his resignation yesterday, shocking the political world. The resignation is to take effect January 1, though Ben-Yair said he would be willing to stay a little longer if this were necessary to ensure a smooth transition to his successor. In a brief press statement, Ben-Yair attributed his resignation to burnout. "These have been three very, very intensive years, with a huge amount of activity, both during the period of the previous government

and during the tenure of the present government," he told reporters prior to a lecture in Netanya last night. "After three years like that, it's only natural that there should be a need to be alone with oneself." However, people who know Ben-Yair said the problem was less the sheer volume of work since he took office in November 1993 than his inability to work with the Netanyahu government. From the government's inception, there were rumors that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu wanted to oust him, and relations between the two have been strained ever since Ben-Yair

decided to open a criminal investigation of then justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman, who was Netanyahu's hand-picked choice. One result of the lack of trust between the premier and his attorney-general was that Ben-Yair felt shut out of the government's decision-making process, sources said. He was not consulted on a variety of important issues - as he used to be under the Labor government - and thus felt his ability to have an impact was minimal. This is also a convenient time for him to leave, the sources said, since there are no high-profile cases on his plate right now. Had he announced his resignation ear-



Attorney-General Ben-Yair

lier - before the decision to indict Ne'eman, for instance - it might have looked too much like retreating under fire. However, Ben-Yair vigorously denied that he was forced out. "There was no compulsion," he said. "The decision was entirely mine, with no pressure and no compulsion whatsoever." The coalition denied that Ben-Yair had left because he was kept out of the loop, saying the new government had treated him with all due respect, and that his motives were purely personal. But while most paid standard lip service to his performance, few people in the coalition were sorry to

see him go. "He performed an important service, not just for one government, but for [two] governments of Israel," said Netanyahu. However, Netanyahu said, he respected Ben-Yair's decision to leave. "He behaved, I think according to an appropriate public norm: that of a man who gives his years of service and then moves on," Netanyahu said. "Believe me, I mean to do the same thing, though perhaps not after only one term. I think this is a praiseworthy norm, whereby people can come from the private [business] sector or the legal world, and then return

to private life or to other occupations." Coalition chairman Michael Eitan (Likud) said he hopes the new attorney-general would be someone closer to the Likud's political outlook. "The context of [Ben-Yair's] appointment was political," Eitan said. "[Labor] examined what was good for them and who was good for them, and in the name of things, [Ben-Yair] wasn't ever someone the Likud would have chosen... But I think he acted more or less objectively - as much as someone appointed by a government can be objective." Knesset Law Committee chair- (Continued on Page 9)



Emergency forces take position outside the Paris subway station where a bomb exploded yesterday killing two people, and injuring 80. No one has claimed responsibility for the explosion. (AP)

Two killed, 80 wounded in Paris subway bombing

PARIS - A powerful bomb shredded a subway car at a station in the heart of Paris during the evening rush hour yesterday, killing at least two people and wounding over 80 others, 35 critically. Prime Minister Alain Juppe told reporters at the scene that a bomb caused the explosion, and French television said it was fashioned from a 13-kilo gas canister - the signature bomb used in the 1995 bombings that killed eight people and injured 160. The explosion occurred only hours after a declaration was signed at the organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe summit in Lisbon, stating that: "As we approach the new century, it is more important than ever that we build together a peaceful region, where all our nations and individuals feel secure." Juppe said the bombing - on the edge of the city's famed Latin Quarter - prompted officials to reinstate an emergency vigilance plan activated after the 1995 subway bombings. It was chillingly close to the site of the worst of last year's bombings, at the St. Michel station. That bombing killed eight people and wounded 84 others. Algerian Islamic extremists claimed responsibility for most of last year's bombings, which also used gas canisters, packed with nails, nuts and bolts. Officials said the bomb exploded on the second car of a long subway commuter train head-

ing toward the southern Paris suburb of St. Remy les Chevreuses. The subway car was a burned-out hulk of wreckage after the explosion, its doors blown off by the force of the blast, and a second car was damaged. Passengers in other cars said they felt the force of the blast. Officials said the explosion occurred at 6:05 p.m., at the Port-Royal station, on the RER regional line shutting thousands of commuters in and out of the French capital. The bomb exploded just as the train was pulling into the station. French radio said the two people who died were killed instantly, and predicted the death toll might rise because three of the wounded were so badly hurt. Witnesses said the scene was one of panic, of thick black smoke, the chilling wail of ambulances, and paramedics frantically carrying away thrashing wounded on stretchers. "I saw lots and lots of smoke and I heard a big boom," said a man who gave his name only as Jean-Francois. "People were crying and in a state of shock." The first ambulances were on the scene within two minutes, a witness said. The wounded were rushed to a nearby military hospital specializing in trauma victims. Smoke could be smelled from blocks away

from the subway station. Dozens of ambulances, fire trucks, and at least 30 buses carrying silver-helmeted riot police surrounded the station. An anti-terrorist investigative squad was on the scene. A man living above the station in an apartment with soundproof windows told French radio he heard "a deafening noise." "I saw the subway car and it was totally blown apart," he said. Interior Minister Jean-Louis Debre said France was tightening its borders as a precaution, and train stations and airports across France were on alert and increasing security. President Jacques Chirac condemned what he called "these unacceptable acts, these barbaric acts that always attack innocent people." "The government and I are determined to fight against terrorism in all its forms. Nothing will be neglected," Chirac said in a press conference outside the presidential Elysee Palace. Chirac had been meeting with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the time of the blast, and the pair abruptly canceled a joint appearance. A witness told France Info radio she heard a large boom and could smell something like gun smoke. "There was a sort of detonation and a strong odor like on a firing range," she said. A few minutes later, the wail of ambulances filled the area. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the rush-hour bombing.

Netanyahu, Moussa express hope for improved relations

LISBON (AP) - Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu held talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa yesterday. Both he and Moussa said they hoped relations between Israel and Egypt could be improved. "That was a serious and very frank talk about the [peace] process," Moussa told journalists after the talks, held on the fringes of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) summit in Lisbon. "We listened to what Mr. Netanyahu had to say. It was a very useful and businesslike meeting," he said about the discussions that lasted for over an hour. "They went very well," echoed Netanyahu. "We discussed all aspects of the peace process in the Middle East," he said. "Of course we have a number of differences and points of view, but I think there was a real desire to understand one another," Netanyahu said. Moussa said that he had delivered a letter to Netanyahu from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak

and had received a written reply in return. "We hope we can overcome the obstacles in a fair way... to reach a balanced agreement that would satisfy both sides," Moussa said. Netanyahu said in a speech at the summit that "Israel will not be dissuaded from its main strategic aim - to reach a comprehensive peace with all its neighbors." In his speech to the OSCE summit, which he attended as an observer, Netanyahu said "terrorism in the heart of our major cities and along our northern border... emanated from areas under control of our negotiating partners." "And while at the negotiating table we have been speaking about the need for confidence building, on the ground we have witnessed military movements that have precisely the opposite effect." Netanyahu did not further describe the military movements. The prime minister also defended his government's (Continued on Page 9)

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Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Shmuel Meir, an outspoken city leader for the past decade, was killed yesterday afternoon when an oncoming truck swerved into his van on the Hizmeb-Adam road, just east of the city. Meir was pronounced dead at the scene. His companion in the van, Ateret Cohanin settlement group head Matti Dan, was moderately injured. Story, Page 2 (Brian Henner)

Knesset debates... donut deliveries?

LIAT COLLINS

IT was the donut debate of the decade. The issue of who will distribute those round, jelly-filled balls of calories to soldiers dominated the Knesset's plenum agenda yesterday, and was eventually referred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee for further deliberations. Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai answered several motions to the agenda on the subject, which revolved around the question of whether Habad activists are allowed into IDF camps to give out donuts. Meretz MK Ran Cohen was the most vocal opponent of the policy, while the Likud's Silvan Shalom accused the left of baseless hatred. In his answer, Mordechai announced that in the coming days he will (Continued on Page 9)

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מזאמן אלחא

Jerusalem deputy mayor Meir killed in road crash

BILL HUTMAN

JERUSALEM Deputy Mayor Shmuel Meir, an outspoken city leader for the past decade, was killed yesterday afternoon when an oncoming truck swerved into his van on the Hizme-Adam road just east of the city.

Meir, among the most well known figures behind the effort to settle Jewish families in the capital's Arab neighborhoods, was pronounced dead at the scene. His companion in the car, Ateret Cohanim settlement group head Matti Dan, was moderately injured.

Police detained the driver of the truck, a UN vehicle, and charges will likely be filed against him, a police spokesman said. The initial investigation found that the truck driver, a Jerusalem resident who was released on bail after questioning, was driving too fast for the rainy conditions when he hit the side of Meir's van, the spokesman said.

"Shmuel Meir was a courageous fighter for the unity of Jerusalem, which was the most important thing for him," Mayor Ehud Olmert said last night, at a memorial service at City Hall. City leaders and many senior figures in the settlement movement attended.

"All of us here - coalition members, councilors, friends, and political foes - we all already feel his great absence," Olmert said.

Meir, 42, born in Bnei Brak, was married and had eight children. Hundreds participated in the funeral procession from the Rav Kook Yeshiva, where he studied, to City Hall, and then to the Mount of Olives Cemetery.

The accident occurred at around 3:30 p.m., just after a light rain began to fall, when another fatal collision near Jerusalem involving a truck took the life of Givat Ze'ev resident Gregory Leibovitch. The driver of the truck that ran into Leibovitch's car, on the Givat Ze'ev-Jerusalem road near Nebi Samwil, was detained for questioning then released on bail. He is also likely to face charges.

"Shmuel was an extremely devoted, single-minded person," said former Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek. "I didn't always agree with him and his extremist positions, but I had great respect for him."

Kollek and Meir, first elected a city councilor in 1988, were at opposite ends of the political spectrum, particularly on the issue that was closest to Meir's heart - Jewish settlement in eastern Jerusalem.

Meir made a name for himself at City Hall spearheading the efforts to settle Jewish families in the

Moslem and Christian sections of the Old City, Silwan, and other Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem. Kollek said such settlement only created tensions between Arabs and Jews.

For Meir, a religious Jew and long-time member of the National Religious Party, settling Jews in Arab neighborhoods of the city was holy work. He believed strongly that Jewish presence in Arab neighborhoods strengthened Israel's hold on the city.

Meir played a key role in the eastern Jerusalem settlement push of the late 1980s and early 1990s. He was the major activist in Jerusalem for then Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who was also behind the settlement push.

Meir and Sharon had grandiose plans for building multi-story apartment buildings for Jewish residents just inside the Old City's Herod's Gate and converting the Mimoniya School in Wadi Joz into a Jewish community center in that Arab neighborhood. The two plans never got off the ground, as did the failed takeover of a handful of Arab homes in Silwan in 1991.

Next week, another plan pushed by Meir, with the help of Dan, injured in yesterday's accident, is to begin its final hearing before the district planning committee. The plan involves the construction of a Jewish housing project in the Arab neighborhood of Ras al-Amud.

Olmert described Meir as a "close friend" and is widely considered at City Hall as being greatly indebted to him for helping elect him mayor. Meir campaigned hard for Olmert and was rewarded with the most powerful portfolio in City Hall - finance.

Meir was also seen as a rising star in the NRP. He was twelfth on their Knesset list in the May election, and had been expected to win a Knesset seat in the next election.

"Meir's death is a great loss to the NRP," party secretary Zevulun Orlev said.

Meir's dedication to the pursuit of clean government may have won him the most respect, particularly among his political foes. Just after his election to the council in 1988, Meir teamed up with a seemingly unlikely partner, Meretz faction head Ornan Yekutieli, to uncover alleged financial improprieties of then Interior Ministry director-general Aryeh Dori.

"Shmuel believed strongly in the importance of clean government. That was more important to him than any political differences there may have been between us," Yekutieli said.



Leah Rabin stands in front of a square named 'Rabin Place' in honor of Yitzhak Rabin, in Cologne, Germany near the downtown synagogue yesterday. She said her husband had started a train of peace "which has only one direction...One day we'll reach the destination of peace." (AP)

Turkey's PM not against F-4 deal with Israel

STEVE RODAN

TURKISH Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan said yesterday that he does not oppose the proposed \$650 million deal for Israel Aircraft Industries to upgrade 54 Turkish Air Force F-4 fighter jets.

"There is no discord related to the modernization of our warplanes," Erbakan told reporters in Ankara. Erbakan did not say whether he had signed the contract, which officials assert has been waiting for his signature for more than two weeks.

Israeli officials reserved comment, but one official said the Israeli government is being assured that Erbakan will approve the deal.

"Every day they say it is a technical glitch that should be repaired any day now," the official said.

Turkish and Israeli defense sources said Erbakan, who entered office last year on a pledge of reducing military cooperation with Israel, has complained that the deal is too expensive for Ankara. He said the interest being charged by Israeli banks will raise the costs of the contract to \$800 million.

An Israeli defense source said the interest rate reflects the amount of risk determined by the banks in lending money to a project in financially-ailing Turkey. "The interest might be high but don't forget it's the banks that take the risk," the source said.

Another Erbakan complaint is that Turkey's aircraft industry will have insufficient work in the contract.

IAI executives are refusing to comment, but defense industry sources said that an attempt to impose new terms to the F-4 upgrade deal would set the project back significantly. They said IAI has no money to fund the deal and is dependent on bank approval for every project.

Ben-Yair's term marked by controversy

BACKGROUND
EVELYN GORDON

ATTORNEY-GENERAL Michael Ben-Yair's tenure produced few revolutionary decisions, but it nevertheless generated much controversy.

As head of the country's prosecution, Ben-Yair presided over some high-profile indictments. Former Jewish Agency chairman Simha Dinitz, for instance, was indicted in February 1994 for fraudulently charging personal expenses to the agency, and former agency treasurer MK Meir Sheerit (Likud) was indicted for the same offense in December 1995. *Ma'ariv* publisher Ofer Nimrodi was indicted for illegal wiretapping in August 1995, and *Yedioth Aharonot* editors Moshe Vardi and Ruth Ben-Ari were indicted for the same offense this February. MK Avi Yehzekel (Labor) was indicted for using Histadrut funds in his election campaign this past January.

Decisions not to indict
However, Ben-Yair also made many high-profile decisions not to indict, which led to conflict with both the High Court of Justice and State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat.

In April 1994, the court ordered him to reopen an investigation against then police inspector-general Rafi Peled for accepting discounts from a hotel chain, saying he had

closed it too hastily. Ben-Yair's decision not to indict then housing minister Binjamin Ben-Eliezer for misusing ministry funds this February led to a public and furious argument with Ben-Porat, who felt the minister should have been indicted. In August, the High Court ordered him to indict MK Avner Shaki (National Religious Party), saying his decision not to do so was so unreasonable as to be illegal.

Accusations of politicization
Against this background, a flurry of activity during the first month of the Netanyahu government's tenure led to angry accusations of politicization from coalition MKs. During this month, Ben-Yair ordered the indictment of both Agriculture Minister Raphael Eitan (Tsomet) and Jerusalem Mayor MK Ehud Olmert (Likud), as well as a criminal investigation into then justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman, whom he later decided to indict. Ben-Yair, however, said the timing was purely coincidental.

Showdown with IDF
One indictment aroused the ire of the entire political spectrum: That of Lt. Yehoshua Sadiel, in June 1995, for negligence in the death of one his soldiers during an operation in

Lebanon in 1992. The decision, which overturned a long-standing policy of not indicting for accidental deaths during actual operations, was made over the objections of then judge advocate-general Ilan Schiff, and evoked angry responses from the army. President Ezer Weizman and MKs of every political hue. This March, however, a military court threw out the indictment, and Ben-Yair said he would not again interfere in the judge advocate-general's decisions.

Free speech
One of the major themes of Ben-Yair's tenure was the limits of free speech. For much of his term, the attorney-general was a defender of the principle that people should not be indicted for what they say, and he angered both Left and Right with this stand at different times. One of his most controversial decisions in this arena was in July 1995, when he decided not to indict 30 rabbis who issued a halachic ruling saying soldiers could disobey an order to dismantle army bases in the territories.

Hebron massacre
However, the Hebron massacre in February 1994, and even more the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin last November, led to sharp crackdowns on freedom of speech. After the Hebron massacre, Ben-Yair helped the government take what was probably the most revolutionary step of his entire term: The outlawing of the extreme right-wing groups Kach and

Kahane Chai, on the grounds that they were terrorist organizations. This was the first time any Jewish group had been declared a terrorist organization.

The Hebron massacre was also the impetus for another revolutionary indictment: Rabbi Ido Elba was indicted for incitement in October 1994, on account of a halachic tract he wrote about the permissibility of killing non-Jews in Jewish law.

Rabin's assassination
After Rabin's assassination, Ben-Yair again went through a period in which he filed several indictments against people who praised the murder. He angered the religious community by ordering the investigation of four rabbis for incitement, though he was unable to muster evidence for an indictment, and angered the media by banning it from reporting "inflammatory" remarks - a position from which he backed down a month later under threat of a petition to the High Court. That December, he also indicted the leaders of the civil disobedience movement *Zo Artzenu* for sedition - virtually the first sedition charges ever to be brought against Jews.

Nava Arad
Ben-Yair has also had several high-profile decisions not related to indictments overturned by the High Court. One was his decision that Nava Arad could not take Rabin's Knesset seat after the assassination, because she was a senior civil servant. Another was his decision, in July 1994, that Gonen Segev, leader of the breakthrough Tsomet faction Yi'ud, could join the Rabin cabinet.

Halevy to be replaced as ambassador to EU

DAVID MAKOVSKY

THE Foreign Ministry yesterday confirmed that Israel's ambassador to the European Union (EU) Ephraim Halevy has been notified that he will be replaced at the end of next year.

Officials did not deny reports that Halevy angered Foreign Minister David Levy during an incident that occurred two months ago.

Halevy, a former deputy head of the Mossad, is known to have a close personal relationship with Jordan's King Hussein, and was hailed by Yitzhak Rabin as an architect of the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty. After King Hussein made personal attacks on Prime Minister Binjamin Netanyahu a couple of months ago, the premier quietly dispatched Halevy to meet the monarch during a visit to London and seek a reconciliation. When Levy asked Halevy for a copy of his report, the envoy did not comply but instead directed Levy to Netanyahu, who Halevy said was the only one who could grant permission to see the document.

However, beyond the incident, there is a history of rivalry between Halevy and Foreign Ministry officials, intertwined with an institutional rivalry

between the Foreign Ministry and the Mossad.

In his previous job, Halevy kept the Foreign Ministry in the dark about developments between Israel and states with whom Israel did not enjoy diplomatic relations.

Foreign Ministry Director-General Eitan Bentsur felt stymied by Halevy a few years ago when Bentsur called for a plan that he believed would ensure that North Korea would not sell missiles to Iran.

The Foreign Ministry fought the proposed appointment of Halevy to become ambassador to Amman a couple of years ago, believing that this would lead to the ministry being kept in the dark on Jordanian affairs. Rabin yielded to pressure and instead named Halevy ambassador to the EU in Brussels.

A Foreign Ministry statement yesterday sought to minimize any differences with Halevy, saying that his term in Brussels was originally set for two years, and this mission to be completed. It said that notifying a diplomat a year in advance about the end of his term was routine, and noted that letters have gone out to about 100 diplomats along the same lines.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Reservist refuses to guard settlers

An IDF disciplinary court sentenced a reserve lieutenant to 18 days hard labor for refusing to join his unit in protecting settlers in the Gush Etzion area. Lt. Roi Kozlovsky, a 30-year-old architect, said he could not participate in guarding people "who are criminals and who have taken land from other people," said members of the conscientious objector organization Yesh Gvul.

Kozlovsky, who is moving to Tel Aviv from Jerusalem, told the court "the responsibility for doing immoral deeds is not only on those who give the order, but also on all those ready to carry the orders out, even if they don't agree to them." Yesh Gvul said. The IDF last night confirmed the sentence but denied that refusal to serve in the territories was a phenomena. *Arieh O'Sullivan*

Lebanese civilian wounded by IDF fire

A Lebanese civilian was badly wounded by IDF soldiers in the security zone yesterday afternoon, as tension in the region remained high.

The incident occurred when troops in the zone's eastern sector spotted a vehicle driving towards them in what appeared to be a suspicious manner. They opened fire, badly wounding the driver of the vehicle. He was treated at the scene and later evacuated to a hospital in Israel. It was not clear last night whether the incident was a case of mistaken identity, or the driver failed to comply with regulations regarding the movement of traffic in the zone. *David Rudge*

Federman acquitted of throwing firecrackers

Jerusalem Magistrate's Court Judge Bella Kahana yesterday acquitted former Kach spokesman Noam Federman, currently being held under administrative detention, of throwing firecrackers at Palestinians three years ago at Purim. Beit Hadassah resident Elyashiv Keller was also acquitted.

Federman's lawyer, Naftali Wertzberger, said Federman was acquitted because the police had destroyed the evidence - the firecrackers - before the defense could examine it. Federman has said he was drunk at the time, and does not remember a thing. *Herb Keinson*

PALESTINIAN

Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat went to Saudi Arabia yesterday in what has now become a routine visit to Arab states which once shunned him for supporting Iraq in the Gulf War.

Arafat's main purpose in visiting King Fahd is to inform him of developments in the peace process and drum up support for the Palestinian Authority's political position in talks with Israel, a position which has won him increasing influence across the Arab world. Egypt, the leader of the anti-Iraq coalition, in 1990, is virtually Arafat's patron today.

In fact, in becoming a frequent flyer Arafat is seemingly filling the role expected by many when he came to Gaza in 1994. Then, he surprised most observers by traveling abroad infrequently and devoting himself primarily to the economic problems.

Economics, despite Gaza's grave plight, has now taken a back seat to roving diplomacy. But in contrast to his pre-Gulf War days, Arafat appears to know the limits of his influence.

"He's traveling only because the peace process is stagnant. It is not jet-setting but coordinating the inter-Arab position," said Yossi Alpher, former head of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies.

Arafat's advisers say that despite

ANALYSIS

JON IMMANUEL

the increasing number of Arafat's trips, they are short. "He goes for one day after work at 2 p.m. and returns the following morning. We hardly notice he is gone. It is not like before when he was in Tunis. If he accepted all the invitations he receives he would never be here," said Ahmed Abdel-Raheem, the PA cabinet secretary.

Still, Arafat is traveling as a statesman, not begging for donations. He is cajoling and organizing a coalition of Arab states to support the proposition that he is the voice of reason. Whether Arafat's invitation to the Lisbon conference was rescinded or he chose not to go, there is no evidence that he wanted or needed a meeting with Prime Minister Binjamin Netanyahu at this time and in such a forum.

He feels time is on his side and Netanyahu "does not look at

things as they are," says Abdel-Raheem. In his relations with European states, Arafat's economic demands are higher on the agenda than his belief in European political influence.

Despite his call in Gaza yesterday for Europe "to play a very important role to protect the peace process," he knows its political role is limited, said Abdel-Raheem.

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One elderly resident was slightly hurt yesterday when she tried to cross this ditch dug by the Israel Electric Corporation in Jerusalem's Rehavia neighborhood. An IEC spokesman said the ditch, which made entering the building virtually impossible, was necessary to install electric cables. (Brian Hender)

Eighth graders - just over average

Begin: International science, math test scores nothing to be ashamed of

CONSIDERING the aura of Jewish prominence in the sciences and mathematics, Israeli eighth graders deserve a "could do better" grade for their middling scores in an international achievement study.

In the Third International Mathematics and Science Study just released, Israeli eighth graders were just a bit above the world average of 513 points in math and the world average of 516 points in science. Singapore topped both charts, with a phenomenal 643 and 607 points respectively.

Israeli pupils averaged 522 points in math, behind countries such as Austria, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Ireland, Switzerland, the Slovak Republic, Japan, South Korea and the Netherlands.

In science, they earned 524 points, behind Thailand, New Zealand, Germany, the US, Sweden, and various Central

European and Asian countries.

Science Minister Ze'ev Binyamin Begin told *The Jerusalem Post* that while there was room for improvement, the result was nothing to be ashamed of. Israeli researchers continue to rank No. 1 in the number of citations in scientific journals per capita, he said, and "in many fields, we are among the best in the world."

In the Haifa Technion this year, a third of the students are women, Begin said, but more must be done to provide youngsters with role models in the sciences, so that fewer talented brains don't go into law, for example.

Begin quoted a Russian-born teacher he met at Tel Aviv's Mofet School, attended mostly by talented immigrant

pupils from the CIS, who said: "The trick for producing excellence is tradition, commitment and values." Although his ministry does not educate young people, it is getting involved in a project to promote special science activities for children in poorer neighborhoods and development towns, he said.

The Education and Culture Ministry spokesman, commenting on the scores, said the study "shows that Israel, like other strong countries such as Germany, the US, England and Spain, have more to do in this field."

The ministry intends to invest much effort and resources in the advancement of science and technological education - some NIS 300 million a year, he said. A new set of courses, science and technology, was introduced into the curriculum recently, he added.

JUDY SIEGEL

Blumenthal sets off Knesset storm over immigrants

COALITION whip Michael Eitan will meet with MK Naomi Blumenthal (Likud) to examine the functioning of the Knesset's Aliya Committee which she heads, following a storm in the committee yesterday.

Nine MKs from Yisrael B'Aliya, Labor, Meretz and Shas walked out of a meeting convened yesterday by Blumenthal to discuss the alleged proliferation of spies among the new immigrants.

They were followed by former

GSS deputy head, MK Gideon Ezra (Likud), who was due to appear before the committee as an expert. Only MK Moris Zandberg remained in the committee room with Blumenthal.

The protesting MKs said later they were incensed by the stigma that was being cast upon the immigrants. "This is a marginal and superficial subject," said Yisrael B'Aliya faction leader Roman Bronfman. "We would like to discuss matters of importance, such

BATSHEVA TSUR

as housing and employment."

The Yisrael B'Aliya MKs, who appealed to Eitan to examine the situation in the committee, charged that Blumenthal was looking for "sensations" at the expense of the immigrants. They said that two other meetings had been held on subjects which attracted the media, but did not touch on the immigrants' real

problems - one concerning the Russian mafia, and another on foreign workers which dealt with "Russian-speaking prostitutes."

A spokesman for the faction said attempts to persuade Blumenthal to cancel the meeting had failed, even though the head of the Mossad and the Russian ambassador had turned down invitations to appear before the committee.

Blumenthal reacted by saying: "I don't believe in shutting peoples' mouths... If the Yisrael B'Aliya

members had remained in the committee, they would surely have been delighted to hear reports that only a very small minority - a handful - of persons with intentions of spying have arrived here from the former CIS, and that they immediately cut off contacts with their operators on arrival here. Therefore I genuinely believe the debate was necessary and I plan to continue to do everything possible to eradicate the unfair stigma that has been attached to the immigrants."

Court holds rapist, despite accuser's denial of attack

EVELYN GORDON

THE Supreme Court decided yesterday not to free a convicted rapist whose accuser has since been videotaped saying the rape never happened, on the grounds that there are too many questions about the new evidence to justify the man's release at this stage.

David Guetta, 39, was convicted by the Tel Aviv District Court 10 months ago of raping a relative, who was a minor at the time. He was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison. His wife then hired a private investigator to prove her husband's innocence, and the investigator got the girl on videotape saying she had lied in court about the rape. Guetta then requested a retrial.

However, the state insisted that the girl's testimony in court was accurate, while her videotaped statement to the private investigator, David Schneider, was a lie.

Justices Aharon Barak, Mishael Cheshin and Dalia Dorner ruled yesterday that there was no need for a full retrial. Instead, they said, the district court should hold hearings on the validity of the videotaped confession and send its conclusions to the Supreme Court, which will take these findings into

account when hearing Guetta's appeal. This process could easily take months, however, so Guetta asked to be released in the meantime.

Because of the questions surrounding the tape, however, the justices said Guetta's release at this stage would be premature.

Both the state and the girl claim that Schneider entrapped her into lying by making her fall in love with him, and then pretending that he wanted to stage a robbery against himself to collect insurance money on his property. He told her he wanted a female accomplice who would be capable of lying to the insurance company. The girl says she was so in love with him that she lied to convince him of her suitability as his accomplice, telling him she had even gotten a man convicted of a rape that never happened by lying to the police.

As proof that the girl was lying to Schneider and telling the truth in court, the prosecution notes that the girl told Schneider she never even had sex with Guetta. Guetta, however, admitted to sleeping with her; he merely said it was with her consent.

Court grants furlough to mentally ill man serving life for murder

RAINE MARCUS

THE Jerusalem District Court yesterday ruled that a mentally ill prisoner serving a life term for murdering his wife be granted a furlough, despite objections by Prisons Service authorities and police.

Yitzhak Kostika was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1989 for the murder of his wife, Sophie. A court ruled that although he was mentally disturbed at the time of the murder, he was responsible for his actions and was able to serve a prison sentence.

Since he was only imprisoned seven years ago, his term has not been fixed by the president. Under normal circumstances, prisoners serving life sentences are only granted furloughs once their sentences are fixed.

Until a few months ago, Kostika was serving his term in the psychiatric ward at Ramle's Ayalon Prison, and police, the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry committee on domestic violence and Prisons

Service authorities recommended he remain there without the possibility of furloughs for now.

After he was released from the prison's psychiatric wing, he was granted a furlough, but his wife's family protested strongly, and demanded he undergo an external examination. The Prisons Service consultation board reconsidered its decision and his furlough was rescinded.

However, yesterday Kostika appealed to the Jerusalem District Court which approved an eight-hour furlough, adding that there was no need for him to be accompanied by a warden or policeman.

In an interview on Army Radio yesterday, Na'amat chairperson and lawyer Ofra Friedman said that the organization would appeal the matter to a higher court.

Kostika's son Rami also said in an interview that if his father was granted a furlough, he and other family members would fear for their lives.

Campaign launched to boost number of organ donors

JUDY SIEGEL

THE number of people who registered as potential organ donors has jumped by more than 50% this year - to 82,000, or 1.7% of the population - but the figure is still way below that in the US (25%), Holland (21%) and Saudi Arabia (15%).

Israel Transplant, the national coordinating center for organ transplants in Petah Tikva, will launch a campaign tomorrow to register with ADI, the voluntary organization that encourages and compiles the list of potential organ donors.

The campaign, which will be held through Hanukkah, is called "The Circle of Life." Some 1,600 Rotary volunteers will set up booths around the country to raise the awareness of the need to bequeath organs and to register with ADI. Israel Transplant has also asked government ministers

and the 120 MKs to sign up.

In 1995, 4,550 signed registration cards, attached to drivers' licenses, or available directly from ADI at POB 38, Petah Tikva 49100, or by phone at (03) 937-6950 or 921-0248. So far this year, the number of new registrants is 10,721. The current rate is 893 new signatories a month.

A total of 1,031 Israelis are waiting for a transplant, including 800 in the queue for a kidney, 120 for a heart, 50 for a liver, 30 for a lung and 20 for a pancreas. Most will die prematurely while waiting. The queue has lengthened by the 8.5% during the past year. The number of transplants carried out since January is 127: 68 kidney, five pancreas, 16 heart, 15 lung and 23 liver. They came from only 39 actual donors.

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מזכירות

Zaire rebels claim new conquests

GOMA, Zaire (Reuters) - Zairian rebels have surrounded the three major towns in northeastern Zaire remaining in government hands and will soon attack them, a rebel leader said yesterday.

Jean Kabongo, a senior member of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation (Congo-Zaire), said his troops have surrounded Kisangani, Zaire's fifth-largest city.

Kabongo, special security adviser to rebel leader Laurent Kabila, told Reuters in the town of Goma that both Bunia and Walikale had fallen to rebel forces.

Missionary sources said there was shooting in Bunia on Monday, apparently by the Zairian army, but they could not confirm that rebels had taken either of the two towns.

Kabongo said on Monday that the rebels, known as the Alliance

of Democratic Forces, had captured parts of the city of Kisangani, the biggest in the region, but aid agencies said yesterday the city remained in government hands.

The commander repeated his claim yesterday, "We are in and around Kisangani... There will be a big combat for Kisangani but our forces have been there, around it, for a month," he said.

"Our forces will be advancing around Kisangani... We have also got Bunia and Walikale," he added.

The northernmost town confirmed in rebel hands is Beni, 220 km north of Goma. Bunia is 140 km northeast of Beni and Walikale is 130 km northwest of Goma, on the road to Kisangani.

On Monday both Laurent and Kabongo said Walikale was giving the rebel forces trouble. Kabongo

said they had bypassed it to reach Kisangani, site of a major air base and the government's most likely rallying point in any counter-offensive.

Aid agency sources said one aid organization, Aviation sans Frontiers, was pulling out of Kisangani because of the danger.

The United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF in the Zairian capital Kinshasa said it pulled its last two personnel out of Kisangani on Monday to do some work in Kinshasa but the timing was relaxed to the utmost.

Another aviation charity, Mission Aviation Fellowship, said yesterday it had evacuated its planes and personnel from the town of Niakunde, 25 km west of Bunia, for fear of trouble as ill-disciplined Zairian troops retreat in disarray.

New European security blueprint reached at 54-nation summit

LISBON, Portugal - Leaders from 54 nations struggled yesterday with fresh arguments over the protests in Serbia and the problems of former Soviet republics, before adopting a new blueprint for Europe's security in the 21st century, and a declaration enshrining democracy and respect for human rights as the continent's guiding principles.

A long-running row between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh, a mountain enclave dominated by ethnic Armenians but located in Azerbaijan, threatened to block the entire declaration. However, a last-minute compromise, proposed by the US, enabled the summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to adopt the political document.

The document, which has to be agreed by all countries, was supposed to be issued late yesterday, at the end of the two-day meeting. The security blueprint will say that no member of the OSCE will strengthen their security at the expense of others - a concession to Russia.

The guidelines are seen as a way to commit both NATO and Russia to certain principles,

and to reassure both sides, as the Atlantic alliance prepares to accept new members from the defunct Warsaw Pact.

"Given the history of domination and warfare on this continent, [the new security model] is an important step forward," said US Assistant Secretary of State John Kornblum.

At the last OSCE summit in Budapest, two years ago, the organization proved unable to adopt a resolution on the then-raging war in Bosnia, just three hours away by road.

This summit declaration will approve a continued role for the OSCE in Bosnia next year, working alongside the NATO-led peace force and supervising local elections.

Many leaders have expressed concern that Serbia's Milošević, facing an unprecedented challenge to his nine years of autocratic rule, could use force against protesters now thronging the streets of Belgrade and calling on him to quit.

Yugoslavia, comprising Serbia and Montenegro, did not attend the summit because its OSCE membership has been suspended.

But Russia, which has often taken Serbia's side in the Yugoslav conflict, appeared ready to flex its diplomatic muscles in support of Milošević after Western countries ignored Moscow's pleas on NATO expansion.

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told the summit on Monday that Moscow still opposed NATO plans to take in countries such as Poland and Hungary by the year 2000.

Russia won little support at the summit for strengthening the OSCE as a counterbalance to NATO, but Moscow did win agreement on a new round of arms control talks that would adapt and extend a Cold War-era arms agreement on conventional forces.

Tuesday's maneuvering illustrated that Europe has far to go before truly shedding the nationalism that has sparked all the continent's bloodshed since the Cold War ended.

In other developments yesterday, Germany and the Czech Republic said they were hopeful a dispute over ethnic Germans expelled from part of Czechoslovakia after World War Two would be resolved soon.

News Agencies

African bloc head: Time to submit new nominee for UN chief

UNITED NATIONS (AP) - African ambassadors rallied yesterday behind Boutros Boutros-Ghali despite a suggestion by the head of Africa's regional bloc that the time has come to submit new nominees for the position of UN secretary-general.

Britain's UN ambassador, John Weston, said earlier yesterday that the recommendation by the president of the Organization of African Unity, Paul Biya, would speed up the selection process.

Weston said he expected the Africans to submit new names to the Security Council soon.

But after a three-and-one-half-hour meeting, African ambas-

sadors said no new names would be presented at this time, and that as far as they were concerned, Africa was standing behind the 74-year-old Egyptian whose renomination was vetoed by the US.

"All reports about abandoning Boutros-Ghali are rubbish," James Jonah, ambassador Sierra Leone, told reporters. "He is still maintained by the African group."

Egyptian Ambassador Nabil Elaraby, a member of the Security Council, said the meeting produced no agreement on any new candidate and that his government was still supporting Boutros-Ghali.

Mars rover launch expected today

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (Reuters) - The blastoff of NASA's first Mars rover was rescheduled for today after a ground computer, which held up yesterday's launch, was fixed, NASA officials said.

The space agency said it would make its third attempt to launch the Mars Pathfinder at 1:58 a.m. (0658 GMT) today. Forecasters said there was a 90 percent chance of acceptable weather.

The liftoff was originally set for Monday morning but bad weather caused a 24-hour delay. Then, early yesterday, a ground computer glitch halted the countdown with just one minute and 33 seconds to go.

The McDonnell Douglas Corp. Delta 2 rocket had to blast off precisely on time to put the probe on course for Mars.

"Because we have no significant launch window today, that means that we will scrub for today," NASA launch commentator George Diller said.

The bulky computer, which was monitoring the rocket's propulsion system from a control bunker, lost synchronization with a safety system, Diller said.

NASA has daily launch opportunities until December 31. If the probe is not off the ground by then, it will be two years before the planets are suitably aligned again.

The unmanned rocket was to carry the probe on the first leg of its 500 million kilometer interplanetary trek to Mars.

Mars Pathfinder will carry a six-wheeled rover called Sojourner that is the size of an office laser printer. Under remote control from Earth, it will explore the landing site, beaming back pictures of the surface and sniffing out the composition of rocks.

Ice on moon?

WASHINGTON (AP) - The dream that humans someday may live on the moon may have taken a giant leap forward now that scientists say they have a radar signal that suggests the possibility of frozen water deep inside a lunar crater.

The Pentagon said Monday that radar signals from the unmanned Clementine spacecraft have a signature that could be caused by the presence of a mass of ice in a giant crater - known as the Aitken Basin - near the south pole of the moon, which long had been thought to be bone dry.

Other scientists have their doubts, suggesting the latest findings are too limited to confirm the presence of water.



Protesters hold Serbian President Slobodan Milošević's death notice as they protest yesterday in downtown Belgrade. (Reuters)

Belgrade students march, as judges distance themselves from election ruling

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) - Twenty thousand student protesters hit the streets of Belgrade again yesterday, backed by US warnings that Serbian President Slobodan Milošević might face new sanctions if he cracks down on them.

Several Supreme Court judges also lent support to more than two weeks of protests that started when courts annulled local elections won by the opposition to Milošević.

The Court last week upheld that annulment because of alleged irregularities, but cracks appeared yesterday. Several judges distanced themselves from those decisions.

"I won't accept the slave role of the court, dependent judiciary, loyal and incompetent judges, and I won't keep quiet about their shameful role," said Judge Zoran Ivošević in a letter to the independent *Nasa Borba* daily.

The education minister, Dragoslav Mladenović, in effect banned student demonstrations earlier this week, by ordering university departments to make sure classes were

held. He said steps would be taken against protesters, but he didn't specify.

But yesterday, about 20,000 students were marching in the streets again, and at least one column of marchers had a peaceful confrontation with a busload of police.

The students flashed a traditional Serb three-finger salute at the police. Policemen responded with the same salute - a sign of sympathy with the demonstrators.

Later, the demonstrators marched through Belgrade, putting gas masks on their faces in front of Serbia's parliament. They then sprayed the building with detergent and wrote messages on its walls with chalk. "Red bandits, thieves, we are the winners, and Milošević to the Hague," they wrote, referring to the UN war crimes tribunal in the Netherlands.

A few policemen and parliamentary security officers tried to stop the noisy crowd, but soon withdrew.

The *Nasa Borba* newspaper said that reserve police were being mobilized in Serbia, appar-

ently to quell the protests. The official Serbian police force numbers about 80,000.

Police set up positions around Belgrade on Monday, but they continued to permit the demonstrations in Serbia - Yugoslavia's dominant republic. In a possible prelude to tougher action, though, police reported the arrests of 32 people over the past several days for "brutal attacks on people's property."

Opposition leader Vuk Drasković protested the arrests in a statement addressed to Milošević. The breaking of a few windows, he said, is not an "act of terrorism."

He accused Milošević of terrorism for his alleged role in fomenting wars that left more than 200,000 people dead or missing in Bosnia and Croatia.

"It is shameful that your judiciary has not put on trial those who have wrecked our country and destroyed thousands of cities and villages. And not with eggs, but with bombs, grenades, and rockets," Drasković told independent radio Index.

Archbishops of Canterbury have made five previous official visits to the Vatican. The first visit was by Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher in 1960 to meet John XXIII.

Archbishop of Canterbury visits Vatican

VATICAN CITY (AP) - Despite their closeness, Catholics and Anglicans "cannot undo overnight" historic divisions, the Church of England's spiritual leader told Pope John Paul II yesterday.

Archbishop George Carey reaffirmed his "absolute commitment" to the "full, visible unity of God's Church." The subject is dear to the heart of John Paul, who has said uniting the branches of Christianity is a major goal of his papacy.

But it must be acknowledged "that our Churches bear the marks of separation and division," Carey told the pope after arriving in Rome for a three-day visit.

"We cannot undo overnight doctrinal differences and the bitterness that have resulted from the legacy of history."

John Paul welcomed Carey warmly, and said, "We have been reminded again and again that even in our sad separation, Anglicans and Catholics have not ceased to be brothers and sisters in the one Lord."

The meeting between the pope, who heads a church of 950 million souls, and the spiritual leader of 70 million Anglicans is part of three decades of efforts to bring the churches closer.

Relations have grown more prickly in recent years.

The Church of England began ordaining women two years ago, and the number has reached about 2,000. John Paul has firmly closed the door against women Catholic priests, and he raised a protest in his first meeting with Carey, in 1992. An estimated 300 Anglican clerics have defected to Catholicism since.

More than half the worldwide provinces that form the Anglican communion, including American Episcopalians, have women priests.

For his part, Carey has criticized the Catholic Church ban on artificial contraception, which the Church of England permits.

These issues may come up when the two meet privately tomorrow in a longer encounter.

Kremlin says general suspended, not sacked

MOSCOW (Reuters) - The Kremlin blamed the Russian Defense Ministry yesterday for a continuing muddle over the removal of one of the country's most senior generals, accused of unspecified misconduct.

Gen. Vladimir Semyonov, 56, commander of Russia's land forces, was sacked on Friday and his dismissal confirmed on Monday by the ministry, which accused him of "actions incompatible with his post."

But a spokesman for President

Boris Yeltsin said yesterday the ministry had jumped the gun by telling the press Yeltsin had already signed a decree dismissing him.

Sergei Yastrzhembsky said Yeltsin had agreed to Defense Minister Igor Rodionov's request to suspend Semyonov but would not sign his dismissal decree until the accusations had been considered by a presidential committee

on military appointments.

"This decree does not exist," Yastrzhembsky told a regular Kremlin briefing, pointedly avoiding any endorsement or repetition of the accusation of misconduct against Semyonov.

The defense ministry said Semyonov was sacked "for actions which discredit the honor and dignity of a serviceman and are incompatible with his post."

Yastrzhembsky said all questions about what he called "this strong formulation" should be addressed to the Defense Ministry. "Somebody was trying to anticipate events," he added.

General Semyonov told *Izvestia* newspaper he had been called in

by Rodionov on Friday and told he was being sacked because of serious allegations about unspecified "commercial activities" of his wife, who works in the Moscow office of Rosvertol, a Russian helicopter manufacturer.

Russian commentators were skeptical of this argument but were mostly unable to come up with a better explanation for Semyonov's removal.

Interfax news agency quoted Semyonov as saying yesterday he had still not been presented with any concrete allegations of misconduct and disagreed strongly with the grounds given by the ministry for his removal. He told *Izvestia* he would try to clear his name in court.

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Re-aligning the inter-Arab axes

ANALYSIS
PINHAS INBARI

TWO developments that took place last week which do not seem connected, may actually have a covert link. Firstly, the partial lifting of the economic embargo on Iraq, in the framework of "oil-for-food," after Iraq agreed to accept United Nations conditions; and secondly, the lack of assistance the US is receiving from the Saudi Arabian government in the investigation into the terrorist attacks committed against American targets in the oil-rich kingdom.

The obstacles the Saudis are putting in the way of American investigators who are attempting to reach a conclusion about the two terrorist attacks on American installations there, may suggest that the American military presence in the Arab peninsula is not as rock solid as before. Not only are American installations exposed to terrorist attacks by violent opposition groups, but the Saudi government is indicating that the Americans had better move their military bases elsewhere.

In this light, we can better understand the reasons behind the sudden agreement to relieve the closure on Iraq. A theoretical improvement in American-Iraqi relations cannot, of course, lead to American installation within Iraq. This would be too much. However, an ease in the tensions in the Gulf may give the Americans a necessary interim period, enabling them to establish their military installations somewhere else - perhaps Jordan. This might be the reason for America's latest statement that Jordan is an ally; other reports described Jordan as a possible candidate to join NATO.

According to reports in the Jordanian press, a high-ranking Iraqi messenger, sent by Saddam, met King Hussein in Amman. This meeting paved the way to the acceptance, in Baghdad, of the UN conditions for the "oil-for-food" deal. Other reports mentioned the Gulf Emirates acting as mediators between the USA and Iraq. Both

reports seemed to be true. Both Jordan and the Gulf Emirates found it necessary to add Iraq to the inter-Arab balance because they do not like the growing influence of the Egyptian-Syrian axis, with its neo-Nasserite hue. This axis is opposed to the integration of Jordan within the regional security system, and regards it as a contradiction to the "Damascus Declaration" between Syria, Egypt and the Gulf states, made immediately after the Gulf War, according to which Syria and Egypt were to be responsible for the security in the Gulf - and not Jordan - by moving American bases to its territories.

As for the Gulf Emirates, they want Iraq back in the regional balance for other reasons: They watched, with alarm, the offensive maneuvers the Iranian Army conducted in the Gulf. It seems that they face the dilemma of which is worse: Iraq or Iran - a weakened Baghdad now looks much less threatening than the Ayatollahs in Tehran.

This is a focal point of disagreement between the Gulf Emirates and Saudi Arabia on the one hand, and Damascus on the other (Syria is Iran's major ally in the Middle East). Saudi Arabia is a partner in the Cairo-Damascus axis, believing that by appeasing Teheran they can avoid the annual clashes in Mecca with the Iranian pilgrims during the Hajj to the Holy City.

It seems that once a decision is made to end the policy of double containment, the new American administration will follow the line of preferring Iraq over Iran.

The actualization of the "oil-for-food" deal is to introduce a change in the Jordanian policy. Until now it tried to adhere to the conditions imposed, by the Damascus-Cairo axis, on the Arab world. Once Iraq regains its regional influence, we might witness a renewed Jordanian-Iraqi rapprochement backed by tacit support of the Gulf Emirates, which may, again, change the endless reshuffling of balances in the Middle East.

Syria hints at Brunner cooperation

JAY BUSHINSKY

THE world's most-wanted war criminal, Alois Brunner, who sent more than 125,000 Greek, Slovak, Austrian and French Jews to Auschwitz, may be tracked down in Syria if a French investigative team wins permission to look for him in Damascus.

In a historic development, Syrian President Hafez Assad promised his august French counterpart, Jacques Chirac, that he will conduct a thorough investigation of this case.

Assad's intentions already are being tested. French Judge Herve Stephan is set to fly from Paris to Damascus and hopes to receive official permission to conduct an on-the-spot probe there within the next two weeks.

Until President Chirac's intervention last month, Syria continued to deny that Brunner, who is 84, had been given sanctuary within its borders and that he was alive and well in Damascus. However, in a letter to Paris-based Nazi hunter Serge Klarsfeld dated November 29, Chirac writes: "During my recent visit to Damascus, I mentioned to President Assad in the course of

our one-on-one conversation the case of Alois Brunner, spelling out in great detail the crimes for which he has been found guilty in France.

"President Assad replied to me, and I have made this public, that he would investigate this subject very thoroughly."

Stephan, who has been pressing France's demand for Brunner's immediate extradition to stand trial as the wartime commandant of the Drancy concentration camp from which tens of thousands of Jews were deported to Auschwitz, outlined the scope of his projected inquiry in a letter to the Syrian Justice Ministry dated September 9.

Some of the details were elicited from another Nazi fugitive, Otto Ernst Remer, who apparently found refuge in Spain where the judge interrogated him and Fran Remer. The Remers said they had visited Brunner several times in Syria.

Stephan also notes that although two international commissions raised the matter of Brunner's presence in Syria with the Syrian authorities, all that they received was a message indicating that he

was "unknown in this country." He dismissed the rumor circulated two years ago that Brunner had died and was buried in a Damascus cemetery, contending "that this has not been confirmed."

The judge, who notified the Syrians that he will be accompanied by French gendarmes, said he wants to verify that Brunner lived at 7 Rue Georges Haddad, Damascus, where he used the alias Georg Fischer, and that he was linked to such commercial firms as Otraco, Thameco and the Khatar Office in which he was associated with Remer.

He also intends to establish the nature of these firms and identify their directors.

It is difficult to imagine that the Syrians would permit French investigators to conduct an inquiry of the scope envisaged by Stephan, but he evidently is undaunted.

He wants to identify the owners of the building in which Brunner lived, interview his neighbors, find out about the foreign delegations that visited Brunner, check the nearby laundry on Rue



Alois Brunner in 1940.

Georges Haddad with whose proprietors Brunner was on friendly terms, and find the woman "of Christian origin" who lived with Brunner alias Fischer. Photographs of these individuals apparently are in the judge's file.

Stephan wants to ascertain how Brunner was able to obtain a telephone (number 332090 or 332690) by means of which he has

maintained contact with Europe, and to find out who owned P.O. Box 635 to which he had access at Damascus's central post office.

Bearing in mind the parcel bomb that blew off several of Brunner's fingers and blinded him in one eye, Stephan intends to check the Damascus hospital where he was treated in 1980.

And he expects to consult the Christian clergy in Damascus to learn whether they conducted funeral services for him and whether a tombstone was set up in his name or that of his alias in the capital's only Christian cemetery.

Klarsfeld, who heads the Association of Sons and Daughters of the Jewish Deportees from France, has a personal interest in Stephan's mission.

His late father was deported by Brunner from Nice, the French Riviera city which became a major refuge for Jews fleeing the Nazis while it was under Italian occupation.

The elder Klarsfeld saved his family by concealing their hideout which actually was on the apartment's premises and saying that he was the only one at home - that the others had gone to the country.

Iraq keen to end missile saga with UN

IRAQ is seriously working to resolve its outstanding problems with the UN, particularly over its alleged possession of banned long-range missiles, Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf said in remarks on Monday.

"We will focus our efforts to close this file [of the missiles] as quickly as possible," Sahaf was quoted as saying in remarks published in local newspapers.

He also said Iraq was "seriously working" to resolve outstanding issues with the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) disarming it under the 1991 Gulf War cease-fire.

Sahaf said UNSCOM's chairman Rolf Ekeus was due in Baghdad on December 8 for talks with the Iraqi authorities on how to tackle remaining problems. Iraq last month agreed to all UN conditions for a partial lifting of the ban on its oil exports of \$2 billion in six months.

The overall curbs on its oil exports, part of comprehensive sanctions imposed for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, are tied to Baghdad's coming clean about weapons of mass destruction.

UNSCOM suspects Iraq may be hiding up to 16 missiles with ranges beyond the 150 km maxi-

mum Baghdad is allowed to possess or manufacture under the cease-fire terms. Iraq denies the allegations.

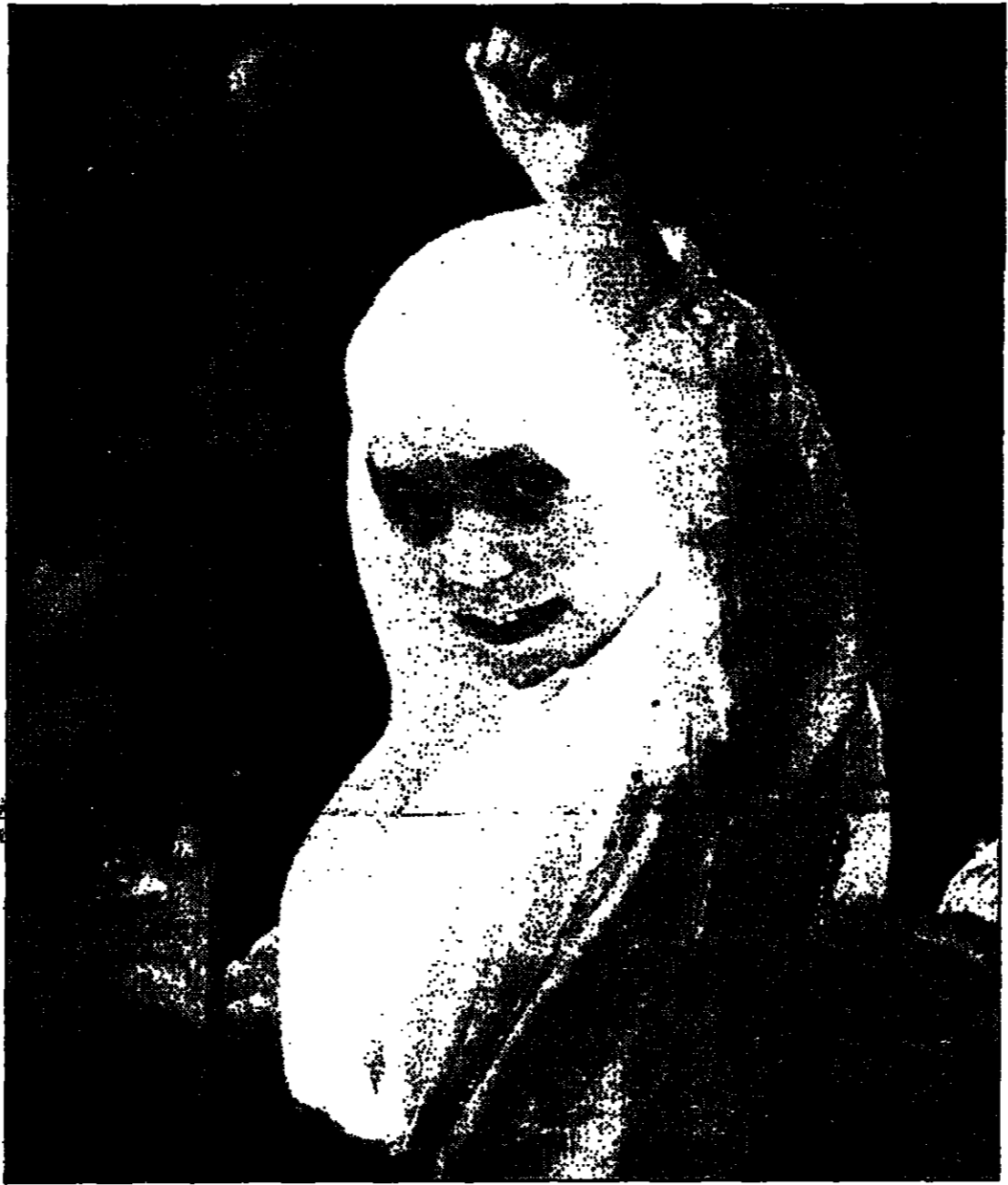
Baghdad last month barred UN experts from moving remains of missile engines outside and UNSCOM said Iraq's refusal violated its obligations under the cease-fire that ended the Gulf war when a US-led coalition freed Kuwait from Iraqi occupation.

About 60 engines for long-range missiles that Iraq said it destroyed in 1992 were still in boxes at UNSCOM headquarters in Baghdad ready for shipment abroad. Another 20 to 25 engines remain buried at two sites near Baghdad.

UNSCOM also says Iraq's latest declarations on past weapons programs are flawed and inadequate.

A senior UNSCOM official in Baghdad said the Iraqis recently admitted the gaps in their previous declarations and promised "to be more exact in the future."

"They have confessed that their figures were not exact enough and have promised to be more correct in when supplying new data," Goran Wallen, director of Baghdad Ongoing Monitoring and Verification Center said. (Reuters)



A young Egyptian girl in a Moslem headscarf raises her fist amid a crowd of adults in Cairo during a protest attacking Moslem militants. (AP)

Turkish PM vows to clear up underworld scandal

TURKEY'S Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan slammed the state's alleged use of far-right gangsters in its fight against rebels, and said he was confident that those involved in any such illegal relationship would be punished.

"You cannot have a gang within the state... Nobody can be allowed to do anything illegal, with no exceptions," Erbakan told Turkish columnists in an interview widely published yesterday.

Erbakan was speaking in detail for the first time since a scandal over alleged "state gangs" in the underworld erupted last month, following an accident in which a wanted gangster, Abdullah Catli, and a top policeman died in the same car.

A government MP, who heads Turkey's biggest private militia in its fight with separatist rebels of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), was also in the car but survived with minor injuries.

"Nothing, including fighting the PKK, can be an excuse for a crime. If such things happen, those gangs, whatever their make-up, will be disbanded," said Erbakan in an apparent rebuff to comments by his

deputy, Tansu Ciller, that anyone fighting for the state was a hero.

Turkey's opposition has accused the Islamist-led ruling coalition of attempting to cover up the scandal.

"The state has many layers. If one tries to cover up something, another section will bring it out into the open," Erbakan said when asked if it was possible for such a scandal to be covered up.

Ciller last week defended the mobster, saying "...those who fire bullets or suffer their wounds in the name of this country ... will always be respectfully remembered by us."

Ciller said she had found, through inquiries, that Catli had not confirmed his conviction in Turkey.

He had been on the run for 18 years and was wanted by Interpol for his alleged role in the 1981 attack on the pope, and in Turkey for the murder of seven leftists.

The media has said Turkey may have ordered Catli or other right-wing gangsters to carry out death-squad killings of an Armenian guerrilla, and suspected PKK rebels who have been fighting the army for control of southeast Turkey since 1984. (Reuters)

Iraq buys food with \$70 million unfrozen assets

SULEIMAN AL-KHALIDI

IRAQ has unfrozen \$70 million worth of funds in a deal arranged by an Austrian firm in exchange for substantial commodities purchases, Jordanian traders said yesterday.

Jordanian traders involved with the deal said it was coordinated by Vienna-based finance firm F.J. Elsner Company and had enabled Iraq to clinch one of its largest commodity purchases since UN sanctions were imposed on Baghdad for its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The deal includes supplying Iraq with 160,000-180,000 tonnes of UK and Argentine wheat, around 75,000 tonnes of Brazilian sugar, and one 33,000-tonnes cargo of Vietnamese rice. Shipments are for November, December, and January for all

the cargo.

Iraq insisted on its only sea outlet, Umm Qasr port, which can handle up to 30,000 tons of cargo per vessel, for offloading the cargo rather than Jordan's more developed Aqaba port, which is also closer to European and South American markets, traders said.

Traders said the recently concluded deal involved the Austrian firm playing a key role in "putting in place the mechanism" of unblocking around \$70 million of frozen Iraqi assets in European accounts in exchange for the commodities.

Traders said payment terms were 30 days from date of shipment of the cargo.

One Jordanian trader said the prices Iraq paid to Elsner had a considerable margin, with wheat purchases a high \$224.5 per tonne and sugar around \$425 per tonne.

Elsner initiated the deal with grain traders Glencore and Toepfer, who are both supplying 70,000 tons and 90,000 tons each of wheat respectively along with the six 13,000 tonnes cargo each of Brazilian sugar and the Vietnamese rice.

Iraq meets most of its needs for rice, estimated at about one million tonnes a year, through imports from either Pakistan, Vietnam and Thailand.

Iraq's Trade Minister Mohammed Mehdi Saleh left Jordan on Monday heading to

Vietnam to reach deals for large quantities of rice under old debt-settlement payment terms, traders said.

Some Jordanian agents of international grains suppliers have long-standing ties with Iraqi grains purchasing bodies and have begun positioning themselves for the coming oil-for-food deal.

In Baghdad, Jordanian and Iraqi businessmen signed on Monday a commercial agreement for trade under Iraq's oil-for-food deal with the UN, the official Qadisiya newspaper reported on Tuesday.

"The Iraqi chambers of commerce and the society of Jordanian exporters signed a joint commercial protocol to lay down the framework of cooperation in commercial and economic fields," Qadisiya said. (Reuters)

Saudi Arabia wants to reduce number of foreign chauffeurs

SAUDI Arabia wants to phase out all foreign limousine drivers to help find more jobs for nationals, a Saudi newspaper said on Sunday. But the limousine services say hiring Saudis is expensive and the "Saudiization" process could take time, the English-language Arab News said.

"Many limousine companies find Saudiization a costly proposition," the paper said. "They say hiring a Saudi driver is a costly affair and it increases their overheads." Of the 18 million people living in Saudi Arabia, about six million are expatriates. Saudis make up less than 7 percent of private sector employees. Saudi citizens had for decades favoured well-paid, half-day managerial jobs in the state sector. But the government can no longer create more public-sector jobs to employ them. (Reuters)

Saudis seize sex stimulants 'smuggled from Israel'

SAUDI Arabia has seized banned chewing gum and drops that claimed to improve male sexual performance, a Saudi newspaper reported yesterday.

The stimulants, sold discreetly by pharmacies run by "weak souls" in the conservative Moslem kingdom, were apparently smuggled from Israel, the ecology daily Al-Eqtisadiyah said. Al-Eqtisadiyah did not disclose the quantity of goods seized from the pharmacies, but said they were mostly made in Spain and

Germany. Pharmacies were selling them for 100 riyals (\$26).

"Before, these products were used on a limited scale," the newspaper added, "but now, they are getting more widespread."

Last year, Saudi Arabia executed four Turks for trying to smuggle aphrodisiac drugs into the country.

The executions caused an uproar in Turkey, and prompted Ankara to send an envoy to Saudi Arabia to try to save more Turks on death row there. (Reuters)

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Politics at its worst

THE period of coy hinting is over; opposition leader Shimon Peres is now openly pushing for a unity government, or what he calls a "peace government."

While Peres has not come out and warned of war, he has come perilously close. In the Knesset on Monday, he said, "There has been a great deterioration in relations between us and the Arab world. One must be careful. It could reach a point where it will be difficult to remedy the situation."

Other Labor leaders were less circumspect. MK Moshe Shalish said that, "Unless there is a significant change, we are likely to find ourselves at the beginning of the year in a military confrontation with the Arab world and specifically with Syria."

Indeed, the opposition does have the right and the responsibility to sound warnings regarding disturbing trends and threats to the nation. But there is a fine line, however, between warning of threats and contributing to the threats themselves.

Peres says the reason he now feels comfortable advocating a unity government is that the Netanyahu cabinet has adopted the Oslo process. By any account and despite the bitter opposition of the right wing, Netanyahu has embraced the Oslo framework beyond all expectations.

During the election, Netanyahu could barely refer to Oslo by name, preferring to speak of "honoring all of Israel's international agreements."

If anything, the Netanyahu government has exhibited a strong desire to prove its commitment to Oslo by redeploying the IDF in Hebron, despite the new situation created by the violence in September and despite all the Palestinian violations of Oslo that the government itself has documented.

The threats by Arab leaders to suspend the peace process or even to resort to war should not be acceptable to any Israeli leader. This is true even if the Netanyahu government had not adopted the Oslo framework to such a surprising degree. Given Peres's own declaration that the government has adopted Oslo, his reluctance to condemn the Arab threats against Israel is even more inexcusable.

A responsible opposition should be able to keep an eye on the national interest and not just

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Politics at its worst

THE interests of the party. There is no reason, for example, that Labor leaders cannot critique government policies while condemning Arab threats against Israel as well.

After all, when Arab countries threaten Israel, they threaten the peace process itself; whether by Egypt threatening to freeze normalization or Syria threatening to seize the Golan. While opponents of the peace process may not view such threats with alarm, it is surprising that supporters of the process say nothing.

Unfortunately, the only explanation of this silence is that the opposition views any reduction of the siege atmosphere to be against its own interests. In particular, the Labor supporters of a unity government seem to see Israel's isolation as their own ticket to joining the government.

Besides being an example of politics at its worst, such tactics amount to playing with fire. Even though war is probably much less likely than some headlines would suggest - and by a purely military calculation, a war could be devastating for the Arab side - wars, as Saddam Hussein demonstrated, may not be launched on purely military considerations. Hafez Assad may be more cautious than Saddam Hussein, but he is no more restrained by public opinion or by the prospect of substantial casualties on his own side.

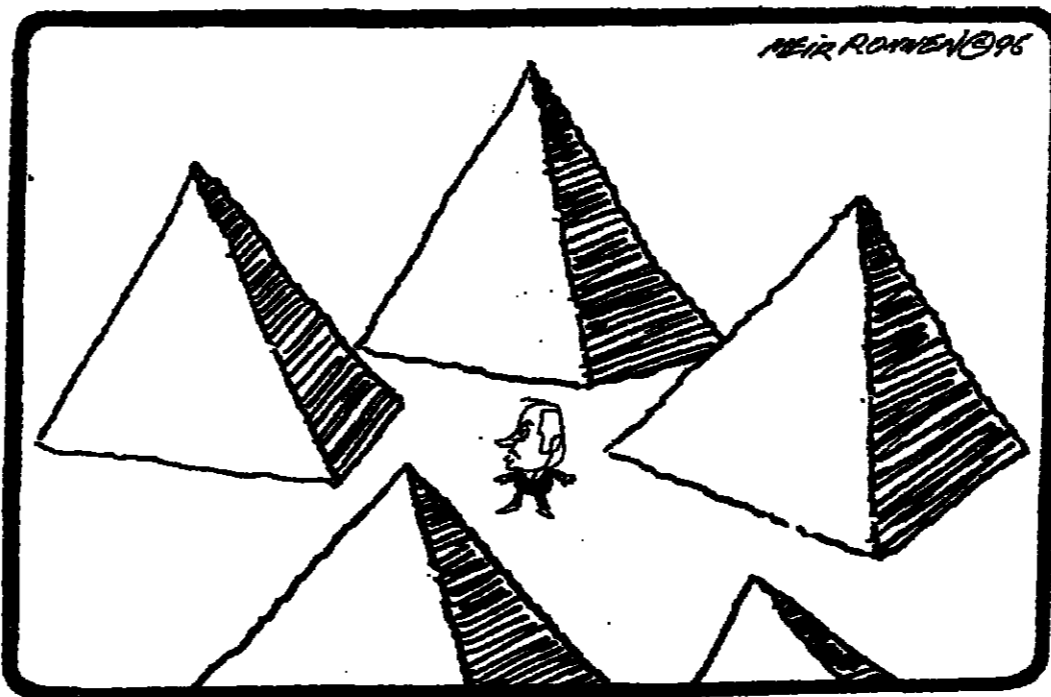
Clearly, Israel should do everything in its power to deter war militarily. Even if the Time magazine article claiming that Israel is not ready for war is exaggerated, it serves as a wake-up call that should not be ignored.

No less important than military deterrence is political deterrence. The primary component of such deterrence is preventing a situation in which Israel could be blamed for a war, even one started by the Arab side. While this is mainly the job of the government, it is also the responsibility of the opposition.

Opposition leaders should be crystal clear that, whatever their differences with the government, Arab threats of resorting to war or abandoning the peace process cannot be justified. Such statements by Israel's opposition could inspire foreign governments to follow suit, and put serious pressure on the Arab world to settle its grievances through negotiations rather than threats.

That such a reduction in pressure will help the Netanyahu government should not be a consideration; it will help Israel and it will help peace. US Senator Arthur Vandenberg was an ardent isolationist until the Japanese attack against Pearl Harbor in 1941. After that he became a central figure in the bipartisan support of the UN effort and in the establishment of the United Nations and NATO. Vandenberg explained his bipartisan approach to foreign policy by declaring simply, "Politics stops at the water's edge."

It took Pearl Harbor for Senator Vandenberg to become a constructive opponent of his government's foreign policy. The time for the Labor Party to discover such wisdom is before an attack on Israel, not after.



The winds of war

ABOUT two weeks ago a banner headline in Yediot Aharonot screamed "Danger of War with Syria." The paper cited military intelligence warnings that without a political "breakthrough" Hafez Assad could go for the military option "to restart the political process."

Then at the beginning of this week tension spread to the surrounding Arab states. Egypt's Hosni Mubarak threatened a "cooling off" of normalization (was there ever any?) with Israel. Saudi Arabia spoke of "fear of war in the region." And the Jordanian premier expressed trepidation over the future of Jordan's peace with Israel.

The drums of war are being beaten again in the Middle East, and as usual the culprit is the state of Israel - with one difference. This time it isn't all of Israel. The peace camp is guiltless.

Israel's Left, along with the mothers who have been placing those anti-army-service ads in the press on their sons' behalf, have already determined that if the Syrians do attack us Assad won't be the one to blame but Benjamin Netanyahu.

Virtually invited to commit aggression and already exonerated from guilt by the mothers of his future victims, can Assad possibly be persuaded to abandon the military operation he is preparing virtually in front of our eyes by anything other than total capitulation to his demands?

As for what this "breakthrough" could achieve politically, Assad can contemplate a successful precedent.

About three months ago Yasser Arafat failed to get his way with Netanyahu. When he then used his army to kill 16 Israeli officers and soldiers many Israeli mothers blamed Netanyahu and not the chairman for their sons' deaths.

Our opposition and media, meanwhile, conducted the (Israeli) choir singing the "song

YISRAEL HAREL

for Arafat," which led to unprecedented and dangerous international support for Palestinian violence.

Now the Arabs know. When they don't get what they want through negotiations, there's always violence. And the Israeli opposition will be widely quoted as saying that the Palestinians (or Syrians, or Egyptians) "had no

Instead of propping up a weak prime minister our elite is virtually inviting Assad to attack

choice," that "the reckless Netanyahu government pushed them up against the wall."

The opposition and most of the media are trying to say that if only Netanyahu were flexible instead of stubborn the winds of war wouldn't blow.

They are entitled to say that. But why, when the chief of military intelligence says Assad might initiate hostilities, are all the accusing glares automatically directed at Israel?

Far-fetched as the idea seems, couldn't the "Syrian" leader, just once, be asked to make some little contribution of his own to a "breakthrough"?

For nearly 23 years the Golan border has been quiet, despite the fact that Israel annexed it, rules it and settles it.

Even when Syria was closest to strategic parity with Israel, when it enjoyed Soviet patronage and a virtually unlimited flow of sophisticated weaponry it didn't threaten us with the "military option" the way it does today. The winds of war haven't blown since the separation of forces agreement with Syria in 1974.

There is a New Middle East

THE Cairo conference seemed to justify the jeering at Shimon Peres on account of his visions of a "New Middle East."

The open hostility to Israel displayed there and the antagonistic statements by Arab leaders seemed to vindicate the cynics who scoffed at Peres's dreams.

But closer inspection reveals a different reality. There has been a new Middle East in the making over the past two decades.

I don't mean just Oslo, the peace treaty with Jordan or the opening of interest offices by various Arab states in Israel; nor the widening of the small wedges of business opportunities with other countries throughout the far-flung Moslem world. Welcome as these are they are no longer news.

I mean one crucial thing. Since 1973 we have in effect had 23 years of peace, or at least no war - the longest such period we have known between shooting sessions.

In the early 1950s prime minister David Ben-Gurion estimated that the Arabs would be unable to initiate wars against Israel more frequently than once every decade owing to a combination of the military, economic and psychological burdens entailed. Looking back over the decades we can see that Ben-Gurion's prediction was closer to the mark than most modern public opinion prognostications, or weather forecasts for that matter.

Eight years elapsed between the War of Independence and the Sinai Campaign in October 1956. We used that time to make big investments in the economy, especially in agriculture.

Another 11 years passed until the Six Day War. During that period we diverted massive resources to industrial development and the beginnings of our hi-tech industry. Smarting from their defeat in

TEDDY PREUSS

1967 the Arabs soon declared at Khartoum that they intended going to war again.

They were as good as their word; in little more than six years they unleashed their military might against us once again on the Golan Heights and across the Suez Canal in the Yom Kippur War.

Their relative success was

No Arab state has attacked Israel for close to a quarter of a century

greater than in any previous war. Israel was not by a knockout, but on points. That military standoff propelled the Golda Meir and Rabin governments into the biggest military buildup in Israel's history, out of fear that Israel's relative success might tempt the Arabs into launching another war.

But the opposite happened. The major defeat of 1967 which many Israelis believed should have "taught the Arabs a lesson" only drove them to war again, while our relative success in 1973 seems to have taught them moderation. Instead of calling for a new round of war, Egypt's Sadat opted for economic development.

Several months after the ceasefire the separation of forces agreement was signed at Kilometer 101, followed by the interim agreement, the partial withdrawal of the IDF from Sinai and the reopening of the Suez Canal.

This culminated in Sadat's coming to Jerusalem in 1977. The inexorable wheel of war seemed to have been reversed. We are now in the third decade after the

What has changed? After all, even the rhetoric Defense Minister Mordechai and Netanyahu employ against Damascus is very mild compared with the frequent and far more blunt language Yitzhak Rabin used to direct at Assad.

THE SKIES aren't darkening because of Netanyahu's intransigence. Quite the opposite: If war comes, it will be precisely because Netanyahu is weak and soft, and because when the opposition discovered this it began to pressure the prime minister unbearably, eroding his self-confidence to the point where he couldn't even do what the Left was urging.

And Assad, seeing Netanyahu cave in after Arafat's aggression, recognized this fatal weakness in the prime minister. Watching Netanyahu hurry to meet with Arafat in Washington and hearing him call the PLO leader "my friend" and "partner" just days after IDF soldiers were attacked - and killed - on Arafat's orders, he sensed the time was ripe for him to achieve his goals via the "military option," just like Arafat.

Faced with a threat like this a nation that is fundamentally at one can unite, even if its internal differences of opinion are great.

And if the premier turns out to be an essentially weak man, a responsible opposition must encourage him, build him up, give him the sort of public support that will deter the enemy. Assad would be reluctant to attack a united country.

But our elite is busy conducting psychological warfare against our government. And all the while they yell that the country is teetering on the brink of disaster.

The writer, a member of the executive committee of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, is chairman of the board of directors of Nekuda.

Shelly's shot

YISRAEL MEDAD

RULES are made to be broken, aren't they? That's obviously what Shelly Yehimovich thought on Sunday.

Popular host of a morning Israel Radio interview program Yehimovich was interviewing Meretz MK Avraham Poraz about a dog he had rescued on the Ayalon highway.

Had he given the dog a name? she asked. Poraz replied, "I might call him Binyamin." Retorted Yehimovich: "You could call him Bibi for short."

Israel Radio director Amnon Nadav suspended her for two days and Ma'ariv quoted her as saying, "It was a silly and unnecessary joke. I'd prefer to get into trouble over important issues of principle, not stupid remarks."

What bounds did Yehimovich overstep? Most of the public - and it seems many Israel Broadcasting Authority employees - are unaware that Israel's code of law includes media ethics, and that the IBA has its own professional code, comprising 161 paragraphs, called the Nakdi Document.

Sadly, our research and monitoring shows that many times these rules are honored only in the breach.

The rules violated in Sunday's incident - apart from plain common sense and elementary good taste - would be Paragraph 16, which states that "[IBA] employees must take extreme care when commenting" and Paragraph 26, "the employee must restrain himself from expressing his personal views."

WHAT actually occurs daily on radio (and TV) interview programs - and Yehimovich is a prime offender - is that listeners can tell from who gets interviewed and the questions asked exactly what the interviewers' personal opinions are.

Any heeding of the rules seems mere tokenism. Yehimovich's behavior might be called the IBA norm.

The attitude of journalists, editors and interviewers is one of arrogance. They are above any attempt at regulation, dismissing it as crass interference or political partisanship.

Not till this past October did the IBA amend its traditional practice of having its spokesman rather than its Ombudsman deal with complaints.

And the most prominent media personalities are among the worst offenders.

On another recent radio program Mabat anchorman Haim Yavin stated: "Journalists have long ceased talking about objectivity.... One should try to be fair, but I think that on objectivity,

The talk show host's 'stupid joke' points to a situation that's no laughing matter

journalists have given up."

Media Watch complained to the IBA Ombudsman that in this one statement Yavin had opened a door to the violation of at least seven Nakdi Document rules. We are still awaiting a response.

On TV's Friday evening news-magazine last week Dan Semama reported on the appointment of Professor Israel Hanokuglo as Prime Minister Netanyahu's adviser on academic affairs. Anonymous left-wing circles were "outraged" and attacked Hanokuglo's professional standing and employment record.

His research on genetics was labeled as racist by Shulamit Aloni, who spoke for almost a minute. Archival material was shown out of context.

Hanokuglo himself was never approached for a response, contrary to the requirements of Paragraph 15 of the IBA Ombudsman's regulations.

Our public electronic media are incredibly influential. Their power, therefore, must be tempered by accuracy, objectivity, fairness and balance.

Israel's democracy is largely dependent upon the information its citizens receive via the media and on the media's own ability to conduct itself in accordance with ethics and the law.

News and views must not be dictated. IBA employees must inform, not influence. But that isn't the situation today.

Yehimovich isn't the first to violate the rules; she will probably not be the last.

If our self-proclaimed media mandarins continue to shrug off their obligations vis-a-vis society and the law I fear for the future of our society.

The writer directs Israel's Media Watch.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COCKROACH REVELATIONS

Sir - With reference to your report of November 15, "Journalist accused of offering bribes for 'dirt' on Netanyahu," I would suggest to the press to get the dirt by interviewing the Hartzofim cockroach clan living under Sara Netanyahu's sink. (Hartzofim's speciality - cloaked under the sacred term "satire" - is after all, to dose Am Yisrael with the weekly "poisonous portion.")

As for the Prime Minister's Office's union leader's outcry, methinks it comes a bit late. One might ask how has all the so-called dirt on Sara been leaking to the press all these months? It's clear that someone in the PM's household has long been revealing and/or inventing and pocketing easy money. (By the way, I wonder how any of us would survive the cockroach revelations from under our sinks.)

I know from "the horse's mouth" that, during Israel's war in Lebanon, journalists offered outrageous sums to the PM's office staff to get the gory details as to how badly Begin was affected by the pitiless onslaught of cries of "murderer" at his front door. In that case, the staff person in charge did not even permit the carnage to begin.

SHIRA TWERSKY-CASSEL Jerusalem.

Sir - I am writing to thank The Jerusalem Post in general and Esther Hecht in particular for printing the article about the two handicapped babies who need families (September 27). Due to the wide exposure provided by The Jerusalem Post, it is quite possible that, in the very near future, these babies, and perhaps

MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Sir, - In his article of October 3, Yossi Beilin, who is a leading Labor member of the Knesset, while denigrating the importance of the failure of the Palestinian Authority to annul its covenant calling for the destruction of Israel, really points out the fuzzy thinking of the "peace" camp. It is obvious even to Beilin that Arafat lied to the world when he declared that the covenant was dead. Arafat compounded the lie when he wrote a letter to then prime minister Peres stating that the covenant was rescinded. The conveyance of a lie pertaining to an important clause of Oslo cannot be relegated to minor importance as Beilin suggests. On the contrary, it is an illustration of the PA's failure to comply with many of the material clauses of Oslo.

If an enemy wants to demonstrate that it desires to convert its approach from enmity to trust, the easiest thing to do is to declare its intention in unequivocal terms.

The PA chose to obfuscate the covenant issue with a meaningless vote which clearly indicated that it had no desire to eliminate the covenant to destroy Israel, thus skipping a perfect opportunity to exhibit the sincerity of its desire for peace.

WILLIAM K. LANGFAN Palm Beach, Florida.

QUESTIONING PRISONERS

Sir, - I could not believe my ears when I heard on TV news that Israel's Supreme Court had allowed the GSS to torture suspects, i.e. Palestinians, to obtain information. I appreciate the precarious situation Israel finds itself in, but I simply cannot understand that a nation which remembers, and constantly reminds the world, of the atrocities committed by the Nazis could stoop so low and officially condone this inhumane treatment of fellow human beings, whatever the circumstances. I feel that a country, above all a country as civilized as Israel, where basic

human rights can be violated in such a cold-blooded way, should not be surprised or annoyed if it loses the respect and friendship of a large number of its - so far - faithful supporters. Violence (and torture to me is the worst type of violence) can only lead to more violence. Is Israel really willing to bear the consequences? E. KINSEHER Sevelen, Switzerland.

What the High Court authorized was reasonable physical pressure, as laid down by the Landau Committee. - Ed. J.P.

ADOPTION

others, will find the loving permanent homes they so desperately need. Ms. Hecht's description of the infants moved a fair number of families to call the office of the Services for the Child (Sherut Lema'an Haya'el) in order to explore the idea of adoption.

If there are other people interested in learning more about the adoption of Down syndrome and otherwise handicapped babies, they are invited to contact me at Sherut Lema'an Haya'el. Tel: (02) 675-4701 or (02) 675-4728 during working hours.

GILA HUGI, Social Worker, Special Adoptions Supervisor, Sherut Lema'an Haya'el Jerusalem.

For the love of Labor



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The writer directs Israel's Media Watch.

For the love of Labor

GRAPEVINE
GREER FAY CASHMAN

ALTHOUGH Haim Ramon is still being cagey about whether or not he intends to run for Labor party leadership, the question, according to his good friend Jewish Agency chairman Avraham Burg is not if Ramon will run — but when. Given the possibility that Likud's Sali Meridor may take over from Burg in 1999 if a rotation agreement between Labor and Likud obviates the 1997 Jewish Agency elections, Burg himself could well be a contender for prime minister. Or he may be Ramon's running-mate, if the latter forms a breakaway party and repeats his Histadrut triumph. Meanwhile, Meretz chairman Yossi Sarid is publicly contemplating the possibility of tossing his own cap into the prime ministerial ring.

APPEARING ON Media File with Avinoam Brog, the dapper brother of Ehud Barak, Gadi Sukenik, head of Channel 2's political desk, in assessing Barak's electoral chances commented: "Barak is not exactly John Travolta. He should go on a diet."



Ehud Barak: He should go on a diet.

WHEN THEIR son Nathan Zalman was born, Mitch and Susie Pincer of Moshav Tzipori found themselves with a small problem on their hands. Because the baby was sound and healthy, Halacha dictated that he be circumcised on the Sabbath. That was fine with them, but for the fact that there was no *mohel* within walking distance of their home. They were so isolated that they had to induce a *mohel* to spend the weekend on the moshav. Nahman Sheffer from Kibbutz Lavi was willing, but only on condition that he could be assured of a proper Sabbath service. There is no synagogue on the moshav and only three of its 80 families are observant. So an approach was made to the Hoshaya congregation, which sent a Torah scroll. Hoshaya's Torah reader Aki Barkan lives within walking distance of Tzipori, and happily came to do the honors, enabling Nathan Zalman to be inducted into the faith in the presence of local sheep farmers, Arabs from Nazareth and relatives and friends from New York, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

LIVING THE part. In her eight years with the Sharon Papers, Renee Singer, the popular secretary of the Foreign Press Association, has had two small parts, and has spent most of her time backstage, working with the costumes. Now, she's suddenly been catapulted into the spotlight, and will play the lead role in the January production of Leslie Sand's whodunit *Something to Hide* directed by Mimi Fachler. Is Singer excited? She was in the

beginning, but she's a little worried that she's beginning to identify too closely with her character — what one might call stage fright of a different ilk.

JEWISH MEANTIME was definitely not the order of the evening at the opening of the National and Hebrew University Library of the exhibition of 19th-century etchings of Jewish costumes. Jerusalem Friends of the Hebrew University chairman Oded Elashar in opening the exhibition said "those who know me as a Samech Tet [pure Sephardi] will be surprised that I'm a *yekke* and like to start on time." Be that as it may, the more pressing reason for his punctuality was that HU president Hanoeh Gutfreund was running late for a dinner with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and, after making his own brief remarks, sprinted out of the room.

THE GREATEST compliment for Yiddish folk singer Assia New, who appeared at a benefit luncheon for Herzog Hospital, was when one of the guests asked the name of the young lady who was singing. The exquisitely beautiful New, with the still girlish figure, is a great-grandmother, who also happens to be the mother-in-law of Australian gold tycoon Joseph Gutnick. A member of a distinguished Habad family, New has traveled to many parts of Russia, the US, Canada, Israel and Australia to bring Russian Jews some of their spiritual heritage through music.

JERUSALEM MAYOR Ehud Olmert is much more of a feminist than some of the women who describe themselves as such. When Reuma Weizman was introduced at a City Hall symposium on Violence Against Women as the wife of the president, Olmert, who was one of two men sitting on the crowded dais, interjected to declare that it was high time that Weizman, who is known for her wide-ranging volunteer work, be recognized in her own right and not as someone's wife. In this respect, Olmert practices what he preaches. His own wife, Aliza, a multi-disciplined artist, is encouraged by her husband to appear in her own right and not as the wife of the mayor.

FOR THE gala bash to celebrate the 30th anniversary of *Star Trek*, Jane Seymour, star of *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, chose a metallic, silver-hued gown to express the spirit of the occasion. Entertainment-show hostess Julia Moran was thinking along the same lines and came dressed in an identical outfit. The two celebrities could have pretended not to see each other — or at least one of them might have gone home to change. But conscious of their respective public images, they laughed off the incident, complimented each other on good taste and pretended to enjoy the party.

UNHAPPY TO discover that his hair was thinning on top, Sylvester Stallone put in an urgent call to his barber to temporarily cover the bald patches with hair pieces. Unlike the late Yul Brynner and Telly Savalas, whose baldness was part of their sex appeal, Stallone prefers to remain hirsute and plans to undergo a hair transplant. Who was it that said "Vanity thy name is woman?"

A world-renowned anthropologist suggests that justice has not been done to the third book of the Bible, which jays down the laws for a stress-free life. Ralph Amelan reports

For most people, the book of Leviticus is a yawn. After the action-packed chapters of Genesis and Exodus, just made for the likes of Cecil B. DeMille, full of incident, battle and drama, the dreary lists of priestly laws come as something of a let-down. Worthy stuff, no doubt. Indeed, some yeshivot start their young students on Leviticus to instruct them on pure law, free of distracting questions of personality.

Bible scholars outside haredi circles have tended to overlook it; a few even regard it as the remnant of a primitive culture, with its emphasis on sacrifice and purity. This outlook has been recently challenged, and from an unexpected source. According to Professor Mary Douglas, one of the world's foremost anthropologists and an Honorary Fellow of University College London, Leviticus is a remarkable achievement on many levels. She claims that "it makes the world safe for decent folks," and that it was designed to keep Jewish society free of the stresses that tear other cultures apart.

Douglas was here recently as part of the "Masters of Culture" series organized by Mishkenot Sha'ananim and the Van Leer Institute, and, as well as conducting seminars, she gave lectures to packed halls.

She is now in her 70s, but the evident enthusiasm with which she warmed to her theme betrayed a lively and enquiring mind. In a recent interview she gave an outline of how she first got involved with Bible studies. "I did my student field work in central Zaire. The people there were extremely fastidious and had very strict rules — kind of kosher rules — for what you could eat. I didn't know what to make of them: The people themselves had no theory to tell them why these rules were as they were."

Then she read the laws of kashrut as detailed in Leviticus ("I had never read the book before, but I was used to it because of my field work in Zaire").

In response to your request for responses to today's mores in bringing up children: My children are all now fully grown, so I can venture no opinions on that matter, except one.

If it is true that today's parents try to be more involved with their offspring, why then do we find — in this country only, I think — so many parents joyfully sending off their seven- and eight-year-olds to a sure risk of death or disablement?

Children of this age, and older of course, ride bicycles late at night, on the wrong side of the road, and without lights.

Why the police do nothing to stop this is another matter. But the reason the parents encourage this Russian roulette must surely be a sign that far from loving and succoring their children, they are doing their best to dispose of them as quickly as possible.

John Dicks
Kiryat Yam

being Catholic"), and realized she could classify animals into groups according to whether they lived in the air, on the ground, underground, or in the water.

"When I got that straight, I found that they were projecting on to the animal world the whole of their social world. For example, underground animals lived with the dead, so a woman who thought she had been cursed by a dead ancestor would be told not to eat such animals. They sorted out the universe according to their society and used it back again to keep their society together."

DOUGLAS did not return to the Bible for 30 years. The main focus of her subsequent work is summed-up by the title of her best-known book, *Purity and Danger*, in which she examined the concepts of pollution and taboo in various cultures. She identified these concepts as an important theme of Western society, and applied them in a recent work to the modern environmental debate.

Then, a few years ago, she was invited to give the prestigious Gifford lectures in Edinburgh. She was stuck for a subject, until she was asked by a friend who taught in a Presbyterian seminary to talk to her students about the laws of the red heifer as set out in Numbers.

She found herself at a loss to explain them, as well as the biblical laws of purity and kashrut. The usual reasons given for them — that they were in some way connected with hygiene or were the fragmentary laws of a primitive society or even that, as Maimonides claimed, they needed no explanation — were unsatisfactory. Douglas thought that an anthropological approach might work.

"All other societies have reasons for these prohibitions. Such taboos, however, are used by the people to control and manipulate each other, and they give rise to accusations of sorcery. These



Mary Douglas: Leviticus makes the world safe for decent folks.

make everybody hate each other, and can break up families, even entire villages."

Douglas believes that at the time the laws of Leviticus were being composed, which she puts in the period of the Babylonian exile, the priests were unusually aware of this danger because such accusations played an important part in Babylonian society.

"In the Leviticus code, nobody could ever be blamed for illness. Everything could be done by sacrifice and the world would be transformed by sacrifice. There is no blame in Leviticus: All is done by sacrifice and atonement. The priests have got a bad reputation, and I think that they really need to be read more generously." Douglas emphasizes that in other societies, anyone can denounce spiritual misdemeanors, and uncontrolled denunciations can tear a community apart. But the administration of the Levitical laws of impurity and taboo are placed firmly in the hands of the priests: People cannot suffer because of the arbitrary word of jealous neighbors. "The doctrine makes the world safe for decent folks," she says.

Her studies have taken her even further. She suggests, in a draft paper, that Leviticus may have had an even greater significance than previously supposed, claiming that the sacred space of the text is patterned on, and reflects the architecture of the Tabernacle. "In this light the book is somewhat like a pilgrim text... Only it is an introverted pilgrimage, there is no tabernacle, the temple has been destroyed, the faithful are not moving, the movement is in the book that they are reading."

This kind of symbolism, she maintains, can even be found in the prohibition against eating the suet fat of an offering and its dedication as an offering to the Lord. The geography of the sacrificial body of the animal, which can be divided into three sections or zones, can be compared to the three compartments in the design of the tabernacle, as laid down in Exodus.

Defending her use of symbolism, she notes that Nahmanides drew a similar parallel between the tabernacle and Mount Sinai based on the "three-zone" division. She also uses observations

drawn from anthropological field-work with other cultures to buttress her conclusions.

DOUGLAS regards what she terms the "whole Leviticus enterprise" as "wildly ambitious." "The project of Genesis and Exodus is to recite divine history and law, but Leviticus expounds the principles of God's mind manifest in his creation." She also admires the book as a work of literature. "It is so elegantly put together, so beautiful: They were real masters of literary style."

However, Leviticus, she believes, has suffered through being read through the eyes of the book of Deuteronomy. "Like most religions, there is a mainstream religion, and protest, sectarian religions around it wherever you go. Deuteronomy is obviously a sectarian book, it doesn't like priests at all, very egalitarian and fundamentalist. The outlook in Deuteronomy won, and Leviticus lost and became very meaningless."

ONE problem that troubles Douglas is the accepted dating of the composition of the Leviticus sacrificial laws. "I have to accept what the historians say, but an anthropologist has to construct a community. Some of the laws may be earlier, however it is not clear whether or not they were put into practice."

From every angle, Douglas's first trip to Israel proved to be very fruitful. "I am very grateful to Mishkenot Sha'ananim. They brought the best Bible scholars in the land who are interested in Leviticus and they [were] here, listening to me. I could never have done it in Oxford or London. It [was] an unheard-of privilege for me. We had a wonderful time."

She realized that her theories might ruffle some feathers, but as yet, reactions had been positive. "Anthropologists dare to talk about sacred subjects, but it's a risk anthropologists have to take."

Douglas plans to continue her work both into Leviticus and into her other extensive anthropological interests with undimmed energy. One last question cannot be resisted. After all her work on food taboos and purity, does she detect a little reluctance on the part of colleagues to invite her round for a meal or a cup of tea? "Oh, that's an old joke! No, none, not at all."

Parents must promote safe cycling

PARENTING
RUTH MASON

Your question and observations bring up the need to make parents aware of bicycle safety rules. Here's what Mordechai Feder, chairperson of the Jerusalem branch of Metuna, a voluntary road-safety organization, had to say:

1. As with any vehicle, parents should make sure the bicycle is in good condition — that the brakes are working, the tires are full of air, that it rolls without squeaking or rubbing, and that the steering works without catching anywhere.

2. It sounds obvious, but the child should know how to ride a bicycle. If he falls off often, he should be accompanied by an adult.

3. If possible, have the child avoid riding at night. If he rides at night, it should be for transportation, not for sport, and he must have front and back lights. The

reflectors that come with many bicycles are not sufficient.

Accidents involving bicycles are much more frequent and fatal at night, when the driver doesn't see the rider.

4. Younger children who don't yet know the rules of the road should ride on the sidewalk.

5. Make sure your child knows and follows the rules of the road. He should ride toward the right side, and either far enough away from parked cars to avoid being hit by opening doors, or with an awareness that doors may suddenly open.

6. Watch out for the Israeli driver. Unlike in other countries, where bicycle riding is respected, Israeli drivers don't think bicycles have any width. They don't think they

need to pull out to pass a bicycle. Children should always be aware of the traffic around them.

7. While helmets are not yet mandatory in this country, they do contribute to saving lives and we recommend that everyone wears them. Even the youngest children riding with training wheels on the sidewalk should wear helmets so they associate bicycles with helmets right from the start. But children should know that just because they are wearing a helmet, it doesn't mean they can be

careless. Helmets are not fool-proof.

8. Children should get off their bikes and walk them across major intersections.

9. Stress the rule of one child per bike. A bicycle is not a toy to be played with on the street. Acrobatics and other tricks should be tried in a park or ball court away from traffic.

10. Clothing should be appropriate for bike-riding. Make sure there is no loose clothing that can be caught in the chain. Tuck cuffs of long pants into the sock on the chain side.

BIBLE LANDS MUSEUM JERUSALEM



SATURDAY NIGHT CONCERT

"Ensemble Bessarabia"
Klezmer, lively Eastern European Jewish music
Michael Gorodesky - Clarinet
Eitan Shapira - Accordion
Eitan Kirsh - Contrabass & Guitar

December 7
Concert at 20:30
Wine and Cheese at 20:00

Admission NIS 35; NIS 30 to Museum members, olim, students, soldiers & seniors.
Proceeds benefit The Jerusalem Post Funds.

Next concert, December 14: Flute & Piano Recital
Sonatas by Bach with Yuri Landsman - Piano
David Roimistrovski - Flute.



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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Wednesday, December 4, 1996

Property firms eye Hapoalim's Amot stake

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

AN estimated three groups engaged in the real-estate sector have expressed interest in acquiring 25% to 30% of Amot Investments, the real estate company in which Bank Hapoalim currently holds a 14% stake...

Arafat adviser: Rethink Israel-PA economic pact

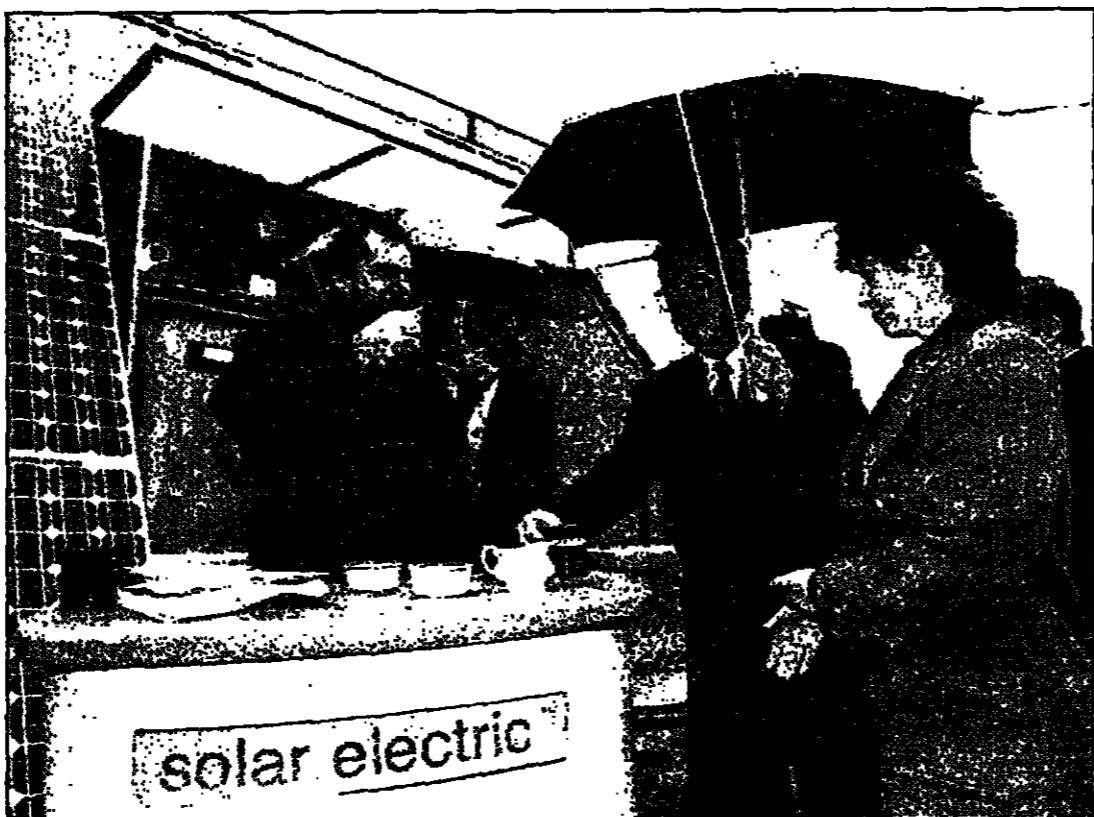
DAVID HARRIS

CERTAIN clauses of the Paris economic accords between Israel and the Palestinian Authority must be canceled and others redrafted, PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's chief economic adviser, Mohammed Rachid, told The Jerusalem Post this week.

Lehman: Leumi to lead Israeli banks in '97 earnings

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

BANK Leumi is on track to become Israel's most profitable financial institution in 1997, Lehman Brothers concluded in their report on the bank.



European Union Energy Commissioner Christos Papoutsis (left) Irish Energy Minister Alan Dukes (center), and EU political adviser Aphrodite Monrelatou have a cup of coffee prepared using solar energy yesterday.

Warsaw meeting proposes means to fight car crime

WARSAW (Reuters) - An international conference in Warsaw on car theft, itself a sign more countries are now taking the problem seriously, was set, yesterday, to propose remedies including the creation of a global database for police.

Menorah Insurance manager Shabtai Angel dies at 60

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

MENORAH Insurance Company general manager Shabtai Angel died last night at the age of 60. Shabtai was considered among the insurance sector's most talented and conservative managers.

Microsoft: European businesses behind US in exploiting Internet

PARIS (Reuters) - Software group Microsoft Corp warned European businesses yesterday that they lagged behind the US in tapping the power of the Internet and this could undermine their competitiveness.

At the moment, more than 70% of computers are being shipped in Europe with Windows 95 and (the percentage) is growing. But there is not much room to grow, he said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Bezeq and the communications revolution: Multimedia will soon become a major business of Bezeq, said outgoing director-general Yitzhak Kaul, yesterday, as he presented the company's five-year plan.

Meridor: Low internal revenue predictions for '97 are 'relative'

LIAT COLLINS

PREDICTIONS of low internal revenues for 1997 should be seen as "relative," and stem from the government's "temporary but exceptionally high" income in 1993-1994, ultimately used as the basis for the 1995 budget.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS table with columns for Currency (deposit for), 3 MONTHS, 6 MONTHS, 12 MONTHS, and Shkel Foreign Exchange Rates.

'A fax for you' advertisement for Israel Discount Bank, featuring a fax machine and the text 'All you want to know about your accounts, on your fax, within 15 minutes.'

Key Representative Rates table showing U.S. Dollar, Sterling, and German mark rates.

NYSE STOCK MARKETS

New York market indexes table with columns for index name, last price, and change.

Other stock market indexes

Table listing various international stock market indexes like FTSE 100, Nikkei, etc.

Israeli stocks in US

Table listing Israeli companies and their stock prices in the US market.

LIBOR RATES

Table showing various LIBOR interest rates for different terms.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Text block providing contact information and services for CommStock Trading Ltd.

INTERNATIONAL COMMODITIES AND METALS

Table listing international commodity prices such as coffee, wheat, etc.

Spot market metals (US)

Table showing spot market prices for various metals.

New York metal futures

Table listing New York metal futures prices.

London metal fixes

Table listing London metal fixings prices.

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading

Table showing multi-sided trading data for various stocks.

Two-sided trading

Table showing two-sided trading data for various stocks.

Commercial Banks

Table listing commercial banks and their stock prices.

Industrial

Table listing industrial companies and their stock prices.

Mortgage Banks & Finance

Table listing mortgage banks and finance companies.

Financial Institutions

Table listing various financial institutions.

Trade & Services

Table listing trade and service companies.

Oil Exploration

Table listing oil exploration companies.

PARALLEL LIST Trade & Services Property, Building & Agriculture

Table listing parallel listed companies in various sectors.

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Large table showing international stock prices for various countries and companies.

Shares soar as shekel weakens

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET



Two-Sided Index Maof Index

STOCKS soared as the shekel weakened to its lowest point against the US dollar in six months, improving the outlook for exporters.

Investors also speculated that the government might unite with the Labor party. A national unity government might improve the prospects for the peace process and reassure foreign investors about the safety of their Middle Eastern investments.

The market indexes were led by Bezeq, which leaped 7.5 percent on speculation that Cable & Wireless Plc of Britain would boost its 10.02% holding in the telecommunications company.

"The devaluation had a lot to do with it," said Ron Weisberg, trader of Israel Brokerage and Investments in Tel Aviv.

"The dollar is going very strong across the board." (Bloomberg)

German shares hit 4th record

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - German shares started their fourth record close in a row yesterday as a buoyant dollar boosted bond markets and French equities within sight of their historic high.

British stocks also overcame some of their interest rate jitters to recoup Monday's fall, aided by Wall Street's positive start and strong debt markets.

Germany's 30-share DAX index

program selling kicked in. In the broader market, advances led declines by a 13-12 margin on heavy volume of about 519 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange. The Nasdaq composite index looked ready to set its seventh, straight record with a half-point gain.

Dow drops on late profit-taking

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Blue-chip stocks tumbled yesterday as late profit-taking overwhelmed an early attempt to extend the rally.

The Dow Jones industrial average sank 79.01 points to 6,442.69, according to early, unofficial figures. The decline accelerated in late trading as computer-driven

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

Table showing currency cross-rates for Sterling, Yen, Sfr, and Ffr.

BEN-YAIR

(Continued from Page 1) man Shaul Yahalom (National Religious Party) also said Ben-Yair "started his tenure as a political attorney-general, by declaring the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza to be a seditious body," but added that he thought the attorney-general had been non-political after this initial mistake.

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi maintained a strict neutrality, saying only that he was sorry to see Ben-Yair go.

The one real expression of regret from the coalition came from Finance Minister Dan Meridor. "I think he was a good attorney-general, who coped under conditions which were not easy," he said. "I wish him well in whatever he does next, and I hope that we will find an attorney-general with the value system, legal ability, and stature to continue the tradition of past Israeli attorney-generals. This is one of the most important positions for the preservation of the rule of law."

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid said Ben-Yair's resignation was "another blow to the rule of law in Israel, which has absorbed many fierce blows since the change in governments." Sarid said he also feared the government would appoint a yes-man in place of Ben-Yair, whom he described as "wise and independent."

Labor faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen submitted an urgent motion for the agenda on Ben-Yair's departure, saying it undermines Israeli democracy and raises the suspicion that he had been forced out.

DONUTS

(Continued from Page 1) meet with Habad representatives and IDF chief rabbi to finalize arrangements, but for now, Habad will be able to approach the camps and drop the donuts off for distribution by soldiers inside.

The IDF and Defense Ministry in coordination with the chief of staff and chief rabbi will decide at precisely what point Habad will have to hand the donuts over.

Mordechai said the arrangement will be in accordance with his policy to keep the IDF out of political arguments.

He called on other bodies which want to give out donuts and candies to soldiers to coordinate their distribution according to the policy.

It will take a Hanukkah miracle to finalize all the details before the start of the holiday unless the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee holds an emergency session on the subject.

Such pressure "has not materialized," Netanyahu said. He described his bilateral talks with leaders here as "very, very friendly - unusually so."

He advocated further expansion of settlements in the West Bank, although he said his government has made no decision on whether new settlements should be created.

Newcastle advances in UEFA Cup

NEWCASTLE (AP) - Colombian striker Faustino Asprilla scored twice in the last nine minutes to put Newcastle into the last eight of the UEFA Cup after a 2-0 victory over French club Metz last night.

The goals gave Newcastle a 3-1 overall triumph. Metz had missed several clear chances. Asprilla wound up being carried off the field with a hamstring injury and also earned a yellow card for over-celebrating his first goal and that means the Colombian missed the quarterfinal.

Newcastle joins Broendby, Inter Milan, Monaco, Tenerife, Valencia, Schalke and Anderlecht in the quarterfinal.

Broendby produced an amazing turnaround, wiping out Karlsruhe's 3-1 victory Denmark to win 5-0 in Germany and reach the last eight.

Results of UEFA Cup third round, second leg soccer matches yesterday:
 Newcastle 2, Metz 0 (halftime 0-0)
 Scorers: Faustino Asprilla 80, 82
 Newcastle wins 3-1 on aggregate

Karlsruhe 0, Broendby 5 (0-2)
 Scorers: Ruben Bagger 41, Dan Eggen 43, Kim Vilfort 53, Peter Moller 74, 81
 Broendby wins 5-0 on aggregate

Schalke 2, Club Brugge 0 (1-0)
 Scorers: Martin Max 69, Youri Mulder 80

Sevilla wins 3-2 on aggregate
 Schalke 2, Valencia 2 (2-2)
 Scorers: Sestakas - Sorlier Topolozep (16), Okay Demireli (45 pen); Valencia - Claudio Lopez (24), Goran Visovic (44)

Valencia wins 5-3 on aggregate
 Anderlecht 1, Helsingborg 0 (0-0)
 Scorers: Johan Walem (58)

Anderlecht wins 1-0 on aggregate
 Feyenoord 2, Tenerife 0 (0-0)
 Scorers: Feyenoord - Fabio Sanchez 82, Henk Vos 87; Tenerife - Felipe S, Juanito 45, 50, Pablo Paz 74

Tenerife wins 4-2 on aggregate
 Hamburg 0, Monaco 2 (0-0)
 Scorers: Victor Iqbal 62, Ali Bernabie 88 pen

Monaco wins 5-0 on aggregate
 Boavista 0, Internazionale Milan 2 (0-1)
 Scorers: Youri Djorkoeff 12 penalty, Paul Ince 86

Inter wins 7-1 on aggregate

Raptors stun Rockets

TORONTO (AP) - The Houston Rockets, playing without Hakeem Olajuwon, had their nine-game winning streak stopped by the Toronto Raptors 100-89 Monday night.

Damon Stoudamire had 27 points and 11 assists for the Raptors.

Earlier in the day, Olajuwon left a Houston hospital after being treated for the second time in less than two weeks for an irregular heartbeat. The problem is not considered career-threatening, but his return to the Rockets has not been set.

Charles Barkley had 30 points and 12 rebounds for the Rockets, who are now 15-2.

Mavericks 108, Magic 102

Visiting Dallas rallied from a nine-point deficit in the last 2:23 of regulation, then got seven points in overtime from Oliver Miller to beat Orlando.

Miller's dunk at the buzzer capped an 11-2 run that forced the extra period. The backup center, who spurned an offer to sign with the Magic during the preseason, made all three of his shots in overtime and finished 6-for-6 with 13 points.

Jazz 107, Hornets 97

John Stockton had 22 points and 16 assists as host Utah won its 11th straight game.

Karl Malone added 20 points and 11 rebounds for the Jazz.

MONDAY'S NBA RESULTS:
 Toronto 100, Houston 89
 Dallas 108, Orlando 82
 Utah 107, Charlotte 97



WHO'S OPEN? - San Francisco's QB Steve Young drops back to pass under pressure from Atlanta's Dan Owens during first half play on Monday night in Atlanta. (AP)

49ers roll over Falcons 34-10

ATLANTA (AP) - San Francisco quarterback Steve Young ran for two touchdowns, threw for another and piled up 254 yards passing in less than three quarters as the 49ers rolled over the Atlanta Falcons 34-10 Monday night.

Young, who has missed all or parts of eight games because of two concussions and a troublesome groin strain, showed the effects of neither as he ran fearlessly through the Falcons to give San Francisco a 25-3 lead at halftime in Monday's only NFL contest.

After Young connected on five straight passes for 62 yards on the 49ers' first possession of the second half, capped off by a 10-yard touchdown throw to Terry Kirby that made it 32-3, Elvis Grbac took over at quarterback.

Young completed 23 of 30 passes, including eight to Jerry Rice in the first half. Kirby had the first 100-yard rushing game for the 49ers in nearly two years, carrying 12 times for 105 yards.

Jeff Wilkins kicked four first-half field goals, the last coming on the final play of the first half, and the Falcons trudged off the field to loud boos from the Georgia Dome crowd.

San Francisco (10-3) remained a game ahead of Carolina in the NFC West heading into next Sunday's showdown against the Panthers. The 49ers are tied with Green Bay for the best record in the conference, though the Packers have the tie-breaker advantage by virtue of an early-season victory.

The 49ers scored on all six of their first-half possessions, running up and down the field for 342 yards. San Francisco averaged a staggering 7.4 yards per play before the break.

The 49ers have beaten the Falcons in eight of their last 10 meetings by an average score of 43-13.

The Falcons scored their only touchdown on Nagle's 7-yard pass to Terance Mathis with 2:36 left after Devin Bush blocked a punt. Mathis unleashed a night's worth of frustration by throwing the ball into the second deck.

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	4	0	.692	355	269
Buffalo	9	4	0	.692	267	215
Indianapolis	7	6	0	.538	232	274
Miami	6	7	0	.462	235	269
N.Y. Jets	1	12	0	.077	221	388
Pittsburgh	9	4	0	.692	299	211
Houston	7	6	0	.538	271	254
Jacksonville	6	7	0	.462	283	288
Cincinnati	6	6	0	.500	299	318
Baltimore	4	9	0	.308	320	369
Denver	12	1	0	.923	351	199
Kansas City	9	4	0	.692	282	230
San Diego	7	6	0	.538	277	323
Atlanta	2	9	0	.154	274	294
Oakland	5	6	0	.455	274	294
Seattle	5	6	0	.455	250	317

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Dallas	8	5	0	.615	254	201
Philadelphia	8	5	0	.615	303	265
Washington	6	6	0	.500	291	251
Arizona	6	7	0	.462	248	332
N.Y. Giants	5	8	0	.385	200	250
Green Bay	10	3	0	.769	348	181
Minnesota	7	6	0	.538	243	245
Chicago	5	8	0	.385	202	248
Detroit	5	8	0	.385	283	289
Tampa Bay	4	9	0	.308	153	243
San Francisco	10	3	0	.769	325	198
Carolina	9	4	0	.692	292	184
St. Louis	2	9	0	.154	238	334
Atlanta	2	11	0	.100	154	283
New Orleans	2	11	0	.100	184	281

Warne returns to his best as West Indies crumbles

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Wrist spinner Shane Warne returned to his customary match-winning role as Australia thrashed West Indies by 124 runs in the second cricket Test on Monday to take a stranglehold on the five-Test series.

Warne dispelled any lingering doubts about his rehabilitation from finger surgery seven months ago by taking four for 95 in 27.4 overs at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

But there was despondancy in the West Indies' camp after a performance described by captain Courtney Walsh as "not looking professional."

"We are playing second fiddle. We are not looking as a professional unit and we are making quite a few errors in the field," Walsh said.

"(It is) probably a lack of concentration or lack of commitment or a combination of both. All the guys are trying but it's just not happening for us," he said.

Walsh said it was "improbable" to target 340, the tourists stumbled to 215 all out in 69.4 overs on the fifth and final day in a virtual repeat of their equally heavy defeat in the first Test in Brisbane last week.

Both Walsh and his Australian counterpart Mark Taylor said Warne turned the match by bowling Shivnarine Chanderpaul for 71 with a superb delivery just before lunch.

Chanderpaul was lured into an attempted cut shot by a ball pitching three to four feet (one metre) outside his off stump only to see it spin back sharply and shatter his stumps.

"Shane can change a game with a single ball and that is what happened here," said Taylor, whose side will retain the Frank Worrell trophy with a draw in the third Test in Melbourne, starting on December 26.

Warne, who struggled for form in the first Test, has now taken 218 wickets in 46 tests, making him the sixth highest wicket-taker in Test history for Australia.

Warne had recovered 85 to 90 percent of his form and physical fitness after his lengthy lay-off, Taylor said.

West Indies started the day on 27 for no wicket but quickly crumbled to 35 for three before lunch.

Although Chanderpaul delayed the outcome, the task of saving the game proved beyond them as they lost their last seven wickets for 63 runs.

Australia 331 and 312 for four declared
 West Indies 78 and 79
 West Indies second innings (overweight 27 for no wicket)
 S.Campbell lbw McGrath 15
 R.Saunders lb Warne 16
 B.Lam c Healy b McGrath 17
 C.Hooper c Taylor b Sevan 27
 S.Chanderpaul b Warne 71
 J.Adams c Blewett b McGrath 5
 C.Browne not out 25
 L.Bishop not out 0
 K.Amrose b Sevan 0
 K.Berjannin c Taylor b Warne 4
 S.Walsh c McGrath b Warne 18
 Extras (8-2-0-1) 3
 Total (69.4 overs) 215
 Fall of wickets: 1-33, 2-33, 3-35, 4-152, 5-157, 6-175, 7-178, 8-178, 9-183.
 Bowling: McGrath 17-35-3 (nb-1), Waugh 4-0-15-0, Gillespie 7-27-0-2, Warne 27-4-85-4, Sevan 14-2-0-2.
 Result: Australia won by 124 runs
 Man of the match: Glenn McGrath
 Australia lead the five-test series 2-0.
 Third Test: Adelaide Jan. 25-29
 Fourth Test: Perth Feb. 1-5
 Fifth Test: Perth Feb. 1-5

NBA Team Statistics (Through December 1)

Team	Offense	Defense
Houston	16 1676 104.8	14 1149 82.1
Chicago	16 1657 103.6	16 1360 85.0
Seattle	16 1635 102.2	15 1159 72.6
Golden State	16 1607 100.4	16 1400 87.5
Utah	14 1397 87.3	12 1057 66.1
New York	14 1351 84.5	16 1431 90.4
L.A. Lakers	16 1737 108.6	13 1180 80.8
Portland	17 1640 102.5	14 1284 81.7
Milwaukee	15 1441 90.1	17 1580 91.2
Philadelphia	15 1437 90.8	16 1490 93.1
Washington	15 1428 90.2	15 1400 93.3
Boston	14 1326 84.7	15 1401 93.4
New Jersey	12 1131 70.7	15 1403 93.5
Dallas	14 1316 82.0	14 1313 85.5
Miami	16 1504 94.0	14 1315 83.9
Charlotte	14 1311 81.6	18 1691 93.9
Denver	17 1586 99.1	16 1707 94.3
Phoenix	13 1387 86.7	16 1534 95.9
Toronto	14 1292 80.8	15 1443 96.2
Detroit	15 1382 86.1	14 1348 96.2
Minnesota	12 1159 72.4	17 1649 97.0
Indiana	13 1185 74.2	15 1474 98.3
L.A. Clippers	16 1448 90.5	17 1675 98.5
Sacramento	17 1533 90.2	14 1352 98.4
Orlando	12 1123 70.2	16 1494 98.6
Cleveland	14 1234 88.1	17 1694 99.6
Atlanta	16 1385 86.6	14 1416 101.1
San Antonio	15 1294 85.3	15 1523 101.5
Vancouver	17 1453 90.8	16 1571 104.4

NBA Leaders

Category	Player	Value
Scoring	Jordan, Chi.	16 196 99 511 31.9
	Malone, Utah	14 141 89 371 26.5
	Redmond, Chi.	16 135 81 358 22.4
	O'Neal, LAL	18 159 70 448 24.9
	Sprewell, G.S.	16 125 113 397 24.8
	Kemp, Sea.	18 147 133 428 23.8
	Gugliotta, Min.	12 115 98 328 27.4
	Duncan, Phil.	12 85 89 281 23.4
	Ewing, N.Y.	14 110 88 304 21.7
	Robinson, Mil.	15 124 57 322 21.5
	Stoudamire, Tor.	17 97 81 362 21.2
	Payton, Sea.	18 148 81 382 21.2
Rebounding	J. Williams, N.J.	12 89 105 194 16.2
	Barkley, Hou.	16 98 171 239 15.9
	Federman, Chi.	16 84 165 249 15.6
	O'Neal, LAL	18 74 187 241 13.4
	Autumbo, Atl.	16 82 124 186 11.6
	Kemp, Sea.	18 58 153 209 11.6
	Malone, Utah	14 83 123 183 11.4
	Ewing, N.Y.	14 77 129 155 11.1
	Gillem, Mil.	15 48 113 161 10.7
	D. Davis, Ind.	13 42 98 138 10.6
Assists	J. Williams, N.J.	16 178 11.1
	Jordan, Den.	14 147 10.5
	Stockton, Utah	16 161 10.1
	Van Exel, LAL	16 161 10.1
	Johnson, S.A.	16 135 8.4
	Hardaway, Mia.	15 120 8.0
	Payton, Sea.	18 139 7.7
	Stoudamire, Tor.	13 99 7.8
	Strickland, Wash.	15 114 7.5
	Peck, N.J.	12 83 7.0

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	T	Pct	GB	L10	Streak	Home	Away	Conf
Atlanta	12	4	0	.750	0	7-3	Won 7	4-2	8-2	5-4
New York	9	7	0	.563	2	6-2	Won 2	5-2	6-2	5-3
Orlando	8	5	0	.615	2 1/2	6-4	Lost 1	5-4	3-1	7-4
Philadelphia	7	8	0	.467	3 1/2	5-5	Won 2	4-5	3-3	5-7
Washington	7	8	0	.467	3 1/2	5-5	Lost 2	4-5	3-3	5-6
Boston	4	10	0	.286	7	3-7	Won 1	2-4	1-5	2-6
New Jersey	3	9	0	.250	7 1/2	3-7	Won 1	2-4	1-5	0-6
Charlotte	15	1	0	.938	0	9-1	Won 3	6-0	9-1	8-0
Chicago	12	3	0	.800	2 1/2	8-2	Won 1	7-2	5-1	8-2
Cleveland	9	7	0	.563	3	6-4	Won 1	6-3	5-2	6-4
Atlanta	8	7	0	.538	3	6-4	Won 1	4-1	5-6	5-6
Charlotte	8	7	0	.538	3 1/2	5-5	Lost 1	5-2	3-5	6-8
Milwaukee	8	7	0	.538	3 1/2	4-8	Lost 1	5-3	3-4	6-8
Indiana	5	11	0	.308	6	3-7	Won 1	2-4	2-4	2-5
Toronto	5	10	0	.333	6 1/2	3-7	Won 1	5-6	0-4	2-6

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	T	Pct	GB	L10	Streak	Home	Away	Conf
Houston	15	2	0	.882	0	9-1	Lost 1	7-1	8-1	12-1
Utah	13	2	0	.869	1	10-0	Won 11	9-1	4-1	10-2
Minnesota	7	8	0	.467	7	5-5	Won 2	5-1	2-7	6-6
Dallas	6	10	0	.385	8	4-8	Won 1	3-4	2-4	3-4
Denver	5	12	0	.294	9	2-9	Lost 3	2-6	1-6	3-7
San Antonio	2	13	0	.154	12	1-8	Lost 8	1-7	1-6	1-9
Vancouver	2	15	0	.118	13	2-8	Lost 4	2-6	0-9	2-6
Pacific Division	14	4	0	.778	0	8-2	Lost 1	5-2	9-2	8-2
L.A. Lakers	12	6	0	.667	2	7-3	Won 2	6-2	6-4	8-3
Portland	10	7	0	.588	3 1/2	6-4	Won 1	5-1	5-6	8-5
L.A. Clippers	8	10	0	.444	5	2-9	Lost 8	2-5	4-6	5-8
Golden State	5	11	0	.313	8	3-8	Won 1	2-4	2-6	2-9
Sacramento	5	12	0	.294	8 1/2	3-7	Lost 3	2-4	3-6	3-6
Phoenix	1	14	0	.067	11 1/2	1-9	Lost 1	1-8	0-8	0-9

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Beilin announces Labor leadership candidacy

MICHAL YUDELMAN

MK YOSSEI Beilin yesterday joined MKs Ehud Barak and Efraim Sneh in the race for Labor Party leader and candidate for prime minister.

Beilin told a press conference at Beit Sokolov he had made up his mind to run after Labor leader Shimon Peres announced last Thursday he would not contend for the post again. "I don't see at present anyone else in Labor leading the school Peres represented, which is the best combination of peace and security," he said.

Beilin said he told Peres of his intention to run and that Peres had wished him success, but "I do not expect Peres's public support as long as he is party chairman."

A Labor Party man for 24 years, 48-year-old Beilin is more veteran than either Barak or Sneh in the party, where he began as spokesman in 1977. He rose through the ranks, first becoming minister of economy and planning and then minister in the Prime Minister's Office in the Rabin government in 1995.

Beilin said he presents clear and formulated positions, and stands which provide a bridge, rather than a compromise, between secular and religious communities, Jews and Arabs, Right and Left. He added that his election would speed up the end to the Israeli - Palestinian conflict, "which would lead almost automatically to the solution of the dispute with Syria and Lebanon."

Beilin said he sees no possibility of reaching a permanent settlement with the Palestinians without a Palestinian state, whose capital would be called Al-Quds, but would be outside of Jerusalem.

Beilin criticized the tendency to elect a candidate merely

because he appears to have the best chances of winning, warning that this might turn out to be a boomerang.

"Binyamin Netanyahu as prime minister proves what a mistake it is to elect someone for whom being a candidate is what he does best. Senior Likud ministers told me sadly before the elections, 'We're fielding a man we don't believe in.' Today they say, we have a prime minister we don't believe in. They say in the Likud that the party lost the elections. One man won, that's all."

Beilin blasted the attitude guiding Barak, that the leadership candidate must place himself in the middle of the political map, to capture the centrist floating vote.

"This center exists four years, and on election day it vanishes."

The floaters from the Right vote for the Right, while the left-wing ones return to the Left. If the candidate's job is to reach that elusive center, then it's not me. I believe the voter has more respect for one who comes with clear-cut positions and especially with answers to what he would do when he is in power."

But Beilin stressed he has the highest regard for Barak and expressed hope the two could compete without mutual attacks and denunciations.

"I don't want to say I'm better than Barak. Even yesterday we sat together for an hour as friends. But I propose a different model, a different approach, an attempt to bridge between the sides, while Ehud represents the repeated attempt of the center man."

Beilin said that ultimately he would support the candidate who has the best chances of defeating the Likud candidate in the next elections.

Asked whether he had con-



MK Yossi Beilin meets the press yesterday at Beit Sokolov in Tel Aviv. (Dana Sherman / Israel Sun)

sulted with other potential candidates, such as MKs Haim Ramon and Uzi Baram, about representing their group, Beilin said, "I am not a candidate for 'the guys', sent out as a trial balloon. I represent a unique approach with a very consolidated political, social, and economic concept; more than any other candidate in the party. At this time I

do not see other candidates in the ring, but I do not regard my candidacy as temporary."

He added, however, that he might reconsider his candidacy if Ramon decides to run.

Barak, Labor's leading candidate, welcomed Beilin's announcement. "Yossi is a serious and talented guy and definitely a worthy candidate," he

said. "The showdown is open and must enable the voters to elect the leader they believe has the best chances of getting us back into power. In any case, Labor by tradition has a collective leadership."

Sneh commended the addition of "any talented candidate. We shall compete with each other in a respectable, collegial way."

From journalist to party leader?

MK Yossi Beilin has come a long way since he started working for the *Davar* daily newspaper in 1969, at the age of 21.

In 1977, Beilin left *Davar* to become spokesman for the Labor Party, and in 1984 was appointed Cabinet secretary, under Prime Minister Shimon Peres in the national unity government formed that year. When Peres changed places with Likud's Yitzhak Shamir, as part of the rotation agreement, to take over the foreign ministry, Beilin went with him as the ministry's political director.

After the 1988 elections, Beilin served as deputy finance minister, and in 1992 was appointed deputy foreign minister in Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government. In 1995, he served as minister of Economy and Planning, and then as minister in the Prime Minister's Office until June 1996.

He is a member of the Knesset's Law and Constitution Committee.

In 1981, Beilin received a Ph.D. in political science from the Tel Aviv University, after graduating with an M.A. in political science in 1976 and a B.A. in Hebrew Literature in 1972.

Beilin's books include *Sons in the Shadow of their Fathers*, (Revivim 1984); *The Price of Unity*, (Revivim, 1985); *The Roots of Israeli Industry*, (Keter, 1987); *Israel: a Concise Political History*, (London: Weidenfeld, 1993); *Israel at Age 40 Plus*, (Yediot Aharonot, 1993).

Dr. Beilin is married with two children. M.Y.

WEATHER

Haifa	13-21
Tiberias	15-23
Afula	12-23
Samaria	15-20
Tel Aviv	14-22
Jerusalem	12-18
BeerSheva	12-24
Dead Sea	15-25
Eilat	18-25

Forecast: Partly cloudy with a drop in temperatures and possible rain in the north.

AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	HIGH	WIND	WEATHER	
Amsterdam	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Berlin	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Buenos Aires	23	71	20	30	cloudy
Cairo	15	59	10	50	cloudy
Chicago	01	30	05	50	cloudy
Copenhagen	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Frankfurt	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Geneva	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Helsinki	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Hong Kong	17	63	20	30	cloudy
Jakarta	12	54	13	51	cloudy
London	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Los Angeles	06	43	13	51	cloudy
Moscow	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Montreal	03	37	09	49	cloudy
Moscow	03	37	09	49	cloudy
New York	03	37	09	49	cloudy

Winning cards and numbers

In yesterday's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the ace of spades, the jack of hearts, the ace of diamonds and the ten of clubs.

In last night's weekly Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 4, 14, 16, 21, 23 and 31, and the additional number was 5.

Report shows youth have 'worrisome' attitudes about Rabin assassination

BATSHEVA TSUR

EDUCATION Minister Zevulun Hammer said yesterday his ministry would earmark NIS 1 million towards education for democracy, following publication of a report on "worrisome" attitudes towards the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The report, compiled by a commission headed by Prof. Ozer Schild, found that, while the overwhelming majority of high school pupils feel reprehension with regard to the assassination, there is an indifferent minority. In certain cases, there was even identification with the assassin and the act.

"Talks with pupils in different

parts of the country and ... newspaper interviews indicate that this is not a marginal phenomenon, but a worrisome attitude of indifference towards the murder on the part of a minority of pupils," the report states.

It says that the indifference could be noticed both in state and state religious schools, but "perhaps more strongly" in the latter.

The committee was set up following reports that three high school girls from Kiryat Gat had written fan mail to assassin Yigal Amir and praised his act. The girls later issued retractions, but the

commission members found their sincerity to be wanting.

In interviews with the commission members, pupils made remarks such as, "My uncle was hurt in a terrorist bombing, so we hated Rabin," or "I don't feel bad about Rabin," and "In our school there are also girls who have hung up Amir's poster."

The Gross High School, where two of the girls study, took positive action to combat the phenomenon, the report said. It noted that the overall attitude of pupils is very far from identifying with the assassin.

In its summary, the report said that schools should not be held solely accountable for influencing public attitudes. However, it is clear that they must deal with the root issues raised following the assassination.

Among the report's recommendations:

- A way should be found to hold school discussions on Judaism and democracy and to leave this open

to free discussion. According to some pupils, their teachers' knowledge was insufficient, as was the time allotted to the subject.

• Home-room hours should be devoted to issues of values and society.

• In high school, an additional hour should be added weekly for this purpose.

• Schools should concentrate on reducing verbal and non-verbal violence.

• The findings were presented at a Jerusalem news conference attended by Hammer and the committee members.

Asked about a decision this week by Religious Schools Authority head Matti Dagan, that secular teachers should not be employed in religious schools, Hammer said: "I would not put out such a wide ruling, if it were up to me ... We need a synthesis between the religious nature of a school and the quality of the teacher, secular or religious. One should not be dogmatic about it."

IDF agrees to external accident probe

EVELYN GORDON

THE IDF has agreed to give an external commission of inquiry the power to investigate previous inquiries into a 1992 training accident, as well as the accident itself.

The commission, which will be the first-ever external commission to investigate a military accident, was agreed upon by the IDF and the bereaved parents following the parents' petition to the High Court of Justice. The agreement was submitted to the High Court yesterday.

Airmen Gil Tzuriano and Assaf Rosenberg fell to their deaths when their air force rescue helicopter's cable snapped during a drill. After two military boards of inquiry reached conflicting conclusions about the accident's causes, the parents demanded the establishment of an external commission.

In an unprecedented move, the IDF agreed to this demand two months ago. However, it wanted the commission's mandate restricted to the causes of the accident, while the families also wanted the committee to look into possible wrongdoing during the inquiry process itself.

For instance, the families said, it is highly suspicious that then OC Air Force Herzl Bodinger set up a second inquiry committee - whose findings completely contradicted those of the first - immediately after the High Court issued a show-cause order on the families' earlier petition against the IDF's refusal to prosecute various military personnel. The contradictory findings were the main reason no one was prosecuted.

Following court-ordered negotiations on the subject, the IDF agreed yesterday that the commission will be authorized to examine any aspect of the accident or subsequent investigation that it deems necessary. In exchange, the parents agreed to withdraw a complaint they had filed with the police against Bodinger, and to accept the committee's conclusions as final.

The inquiry commission will be headed by retired judge Eliahu Vinograd.

Shas, UTJ angry over Knesset committee election

LIAT COLLINS

IN a vote which could cause a coalition crisis, the Knesset yesterday elected MK Uzi Baram (Labor) and Avraham Stern (National Religious Party) to be its representatives on the committee which appoints religious court judges.

Baram gained 44 votes and Stern, 37. Ballots were placed by 102 MKs, although two were invalidated. The vote had been postponed last week, at the request of coalition and Likud faction chairman Michael Eitan.

A two-pronged coalition crisis could result as the Likud had promised United Torah Judaism that its candidate, MK Moshe Gafni, would be one of the two representatives, and the vote had been postponed partly because Stern and Nissim Dahan (Shas) could not reach a rotation agreement.

Shas leader Aryeh Deri reportedly called Avigdor Lieberman, the director of the Prime Minister's Office, last night, to complain of the lack of support for Dahan, who gained 24 votes. Gafni, who gained 36 votes, was visibly upset and said it "shows total lack of control within the coalition. From now on, we [UTJ] are sitting on the fence."

The ballot was secret. The results vindicated Eitan's fears that the large number of candidates would split the vote and harm Gafni's chances. Last week, Maxim Levy (Geshet-Likud) and Alex Lubotsky (Third Way) offered themselves as candidates. Molelet MK Benny Elon also sought a seat on the committee.

MK Ran Cohen (Meretz) had put himself forward as a candidate for the committee, but yesterday morning he yielded to Baram, the Labor party's candidate, so as to avoid splitting the opposition's vote.

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